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OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
HARMONY
OF THE
EVANGELISTS.

Priestley (Joseph)
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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

HARMONY



OF THE

EVANGELISTS

T H E
D E D I C A T I O N.

Rev. RICHARD PRICE, D.D. F.R.S.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

PERMIT me, as a mark of our *friendship*, and of our *love of the same studies*, to inscribe this work to you. It is not that I wish to screen myself behind your authority, or to make you responsible for what is new, and may be thought too bold or hazardous in the *opinions* maintained in it; but I wish to have your countenance for the *freedom* with which I have treated this subject, and especially for what I have said relating to the *inspiration of the books of scripture*. This opinion is not only a bar to freedom of inquiry, but has operated in a manner very unfavourable to the credibility of the gospel history. With respect to other matters of a speculative nature, relating to christianity, I cannot be more ready to

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take,

take, than you are to allow, and encourage, the greatest freedom of thinking and writing, and consequently the most open and avowed difference of *sentiment*; since what is most essential to the christian *temper and conduct* is perfectly consistent with this difference.

In a variety of articles in *metaphysics*, and *speculative theology*, it is probable that, having, at an early period, embraced very different general principles, you and I shall continue through life to hold very different opinions, and with respect to their influence in a theoretical system, we may lay considerable stress upon them; but we agree in a firm belief of christianity, and of the infinite importance of it to the virtue and happiness of mankind.

Whether Christ was a man like ourselves, or a being of a higher rank, but between which and the supreme, there is still the same infinite distance, the authority of the gospel precepts, promises, and sanctions is the same, and the highest possible, *viz.* that of the *great being* by whom Christ spake, who is *his God and Father* as well as ours; and who, if we obey his will revealed to us in the gospel, will love and honour us, as he loves and honours him.

THE DEDICATION. iii

I think myself happy in being united with you in the pursuit of *natural science*, and in an attachment to the *natural rights and liberties of mankind*; but I trust we shall both of us ever act upon the idea of the inferiority of all the civil rights of *men* to the privileges of *christians*, and of the insignificancy of all things *temporal* compared with things *eternal*.

I am, with the greatest esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate

Humble Servant,

Calne, Jan. 1776.

J. PRIESTLEY.

THE DEDICATION

I think myself happy in being united with you in
the pursuit of natural science, and in an attachment to
the natural world and history of mankind, but I think
we shall both of us ever and upon the idea of the im-
portance of all the civil rights of man to the principles
of justice, and of the insignificance of all things
natural compared with things eternal.

I am with the greatest esteem

Dear Sir

Your affectionate

Humble Servant

J. PRIESTLEY

Coleridge

THE

P R E F A C E.

WHATEVER may be thought of the work which I now present to the Public, I can assure my readers that there is hardly any subject on which I have bestowed more *pains*, or to which I have given more *time*: and I never bestowed my labour or time with more satisfaction to myself, whatever may result from it with respect to others.

The *Harmony of the four Gospels*, or the reducing the history of our Saviour, as delivered by the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, to the order of time in which the events really happened, has been a favourite object with critics, even from the very early ages of christianity; and since the revival of letters in Europe, the number of harmonists has been so great, that the enumeration of them would be tedious.

Nor shall we wonder at the attention that has been given to this subject, when we consider how very important a history that of Christ is, infinitely more so than that of any other man that ever lived on the face of the earth; in comparison with whom kings, lawgivers, or philosophers appear as nothing. On this account, those who entertain a just value for the character of Christ, and a proper idea of their obligation to him, are interested in every circumstance relating to his history. They can never be weary of contemplating it, and are not satisfied without viewing it in every possible light, important or not important;

important; as indeed is the case, in some measure, with respect to every person in whose history we take a part. For this I appeal to the feelings of all those who interest themselves in the history of the dead.

What pains have been taken by classical critics to ascertain the exact dates of the most trivial incidents in the life of Cicero, and other persons of eminence in antient or modern history? The motive to all this pains could be nothing but the *interest* they took, and which they imagined their readers would take, in the lives of those heroes, and the desire that unavoidably results from it, of having as precise and definite an idea as possible of every thing in which they were concerned. This is easily accounted for on the principle of the *association of ideas*, by means of which unimportant circumstances acquire a degree of importance from their relation to an important character.

But it is not on this account only that we receive this satisfaction from an orderly narrative of the life of Christ: for even the *credibility* of the history is, in some measure, concerned in it. If the separate histories be all true, they will be found to agree as far as other credible histories of the same transaction are found to do. But if the different histories of the life of Christ be utterly irreconcilable in things of consequence, *i. e.* in things of such a nature, as that persons who lived in those times, could not but have been well acquainted with, and have attended to, they will not be intitled to credit. In a variety of other respects also, the credibility of the gospel history may be evinced or illustrated, from a comparison of the different accounts of the same transactions: and every circumstance of this kind will give pleasure to a friend of christianity.

We shall not wonder that the chronological order of events in the life of Christ should have been lost, when we consider
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that the capital *uses* of the gospel did not require that the writers of them should adhere strictly to the order of time, and that two of the historians, *viz.* Mark and Luke, are not supposed to have been present at the transactions, and therefore might never have known, with accuracy, what the order of events was. Still, however, the gospel history abounds so much with *notes of time*, which, without an express care to prevent it, could not but mix themselves with the narration (having been originally and necessarily associated with the particulars of it) and there is in these, as in all other genuine histories, that are equally full of business, such a constant reference to particular persons, places, and times, so frequent a mention of the seasons of the year, public festivals, &c. &c. that a sagacious reader will find *data* enow for the orderly arrangement of every thing of much consequence, though there will still be much uncertainty with respect to the disposition of some things, the exact place of which is of little moment.

There would not have been so much difference in the harmonies of the evangelists, if their authors had not framed them on very different general hypotheses. Two of these appear to me to be particularly ill founded, and yet they have prevailed so much, that I think it worth while briefly to animadvert upon them.

Oslander, among the more antient harmonists, and Dr. Macknight among the modern, go upon the supposition that all the evangelists relate every thing in chronological order, so that little or nothing is to be transposed in any of them; and to obviate the many difficulties that must occur to every person who considers this scheme of a harmony (as, from the same principle, they are obliged to maintain the exact truth of every minute circumstance in all the accounts) they suppose that all incidents agreeing in ever so many circumstances, but differing
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in any one particular, were really distinct, and must be referred to a different time: and from this source they multiply many discourses, and miracles, which others have thought to be the same; alledging, and justly enough, the probability of our Saviour having repeated the same *discourses* or *miracles*, but not considering the natural improbability of a great number of the same *external foreign circumstances*, accompanying such discourses or miracles.

Such harmonists make no difficulty of multiplying such incidents as those of our Saviour's clearing the temple of buyers and sellers, as often as they have occasion for it (and yet as none of the Evangelists give the least hint of his having done this more than once, I do not think that we have sufficient authority for supposing that even this event happened twice) but it appears to me, that, by the same rule, we might make more than one baptism of Jesus, more than one institution of the Lord's supper, more than one crucifixion, and more than one resurrection.

The foundation of this hypothesis is such a notion of the *inspiration* of the gospels, and other books of scripture, as appears to me to be equally indefensible and unnecessary; and I cannot help thinking that the endeavours of the friends of revelation to demonstrate the perfect harmony of the historical books of scripture, and to remove every minute contradiction in them (so as to exclude from the writers every difference of opinion, and every different conception concerning any fact, or the smallest circumstance relating to a fact) have not only been unsuccessful, and have thereby given the enemies of revelation a manifest advantage; but that, even if they could have succeeded to their wish, the result would, in reality, have been unfavourable to the proper defence of revelation, with those who duly consider the nature of historical evidence.

When

When a number of persons agree in their account of the principal circumstances of any transaction, of which they pretend to have been equally witnesses, it is a strong presumption that they do not impose upon us: because the *capital* circumstances of things are well known to engage the attention of all beholders alike. But if they agree in their account of every *minute* circumstance, it rather affords a suspicion that they have had some communication with one another, and have agreed together to tell the same story, in the very same manner; that, therefore, the number of proper *independent witnesses* is not so great, and consequently that the account is not so much to be depended upon. Because little circumstances are not apt to engage the attention of all beholders alike, and therefore we find, in fact, that whenever eye witnesses attend to minute particulars, they always do vary in their accounts.

No two persons ever gave exactly the same account of any considerable transaction, though they had the same opportunity of being well informed concerning it. On this account, differences in the narration of lesser circumstances seem to be as necessary to *complete and satisfactory evidence*, as an agreement with respect to what is capital and essential to any story. Nay, in many cases, the more persons differ in their accounts of some things, the more conclusive and satisfactory is their evidence with respect to those things in which they agree.

It appears to me that the history of the evangelists has this complete evidence. They agree in their account of every circumstance of importance, which shows that their histories were written by men who were either themselves witnesses of the transactions they record, or were well informed concerning them by those who were witnesses; and yet their style, and manner of writing, their more full or more concise account of discourses, together with their very different arrangement of the

parts of their narrative, and their disagreement with respect to facts of small consequence, demonstrate, in my opinion, that (excepting John, who is well known to have written some time after the rest of the evangelists) they had no communication with one another, and therefore that they are to be considered as original and independent witnesses of the same facts.

It will, I doubt not, appear in the course of my own observations, that transactions unquestionably the same, are related with circumstances that are absolutely incompatible; so that I will venture to say that, in spite of all the ingenuity in the world, their perfect *consistency*, and consequently this high notion of the *inspiration* of the writers, is indefensible. This hypothesis, therefore, not being supported by fact, must necessarily be given up. The very determination to defend a notion loaded with such difficulties as these, discovers such a disposition to defend an hypothesis *at all events*, as must prejudice the minds of unbelievers against a history so absurdly contended for.

Besides, this high notion of inspiration is as *unnecessary*, with respect to the proper use of the gospel history, as it is indefensible in itself. All the great ends of the gospel will be sufficiently answered, if provision be made for the credibility of the *principal facts*, such as the reality of the *moral discourses*, and especially of the *miracles, death, and resurrection* of Christ, as a proof of his divine mission, and a confirmation of our faith in the assurances he has given us with respect to a *general resurrection*, and his second coming to *judge the world, and to reward all men according to their works*. And it is certainly sufficient to produce this belief, that a competent number of persons, having sufficient opportunity of observing and distinguishing the facts, attest the truth of them, and that the subsequent history

history should show that the publication of these facts produced such an effect upon the minds and conduct of those to whom they were properly proposed, as might be expected from the consideration of their characters and circumstances. But the credibility of such leading facts as those above mentioned will not be affected by any difference that may be observed in the gospel historians, with respect to lesser circumstances attending them.

Now it seems to have been the plan of divine providence, never to provide *miracles* where *natural causes* were sufficient to procure the desired effect. And certainly *twelve persons* expressly chosen to attend our Lord, during the whole of his public ministry, in order to be witnesses of his life, discourses, death, and resurrection, besides the innumerable multitudes that must necessarily have been witnesses to many of them, without any express appointment, were *naturally* sufficient to ensure the credibility of all the great events above mentioned. No other history is attended with any evidence that can be compared with that of the gospel; and, admitting the gospel history, on account of its greater importance, to require a stronger evidence, still nothing can be necessary but a stronger evidence of *the same kind*, or human testimony more abundant, and more favourably circumstanced.

Admitting that, if the whole credibility of the gospel history, as we receive it, rested on *divine*, independent of *human* testimony, something might be gained, it is evident that we *now* receive the gospel history on the faith of human testimony only. For the early *transcribers* of the gospels were no more inspired than our *printers*; and in the course of time that has elapsed from the first promulgation of christianity to the present age, copies of the gospel have been so often transmitted from one to another, that a succession of human authorities so great as to

exceed all computation, must have intervened since the first writing of the gospels to their coming into our hands. Since, therefore, divine providence has thought proper to intrust this valuable deposit in human hands for so many centuries, how can it be thought inconsistent with the same plan, to convey it to us in a similar manner from the very beginning; the apostles being naturally as capable of relating and writing an account of what they heard and saw, as other persons could be to copy the account after them.

I own I can see no meaning, or *consistency*, in the appointment of *witnesses* to accompany our Lord, in order to transmit to posterity an authentic and credible account of his life, doctrine, and miracles, if, after all, it was the intention of the divine being to supersede this testimony, by *books* bearing sufficient marks of *supernatural inspiration*. In reality, one single book, the divine inspiration of which was fully proved, would render all other evidence superfluous.

It is objected to these arguments, that if we once suppose that the evangelists may not be absolutely depended upon, with respect to any particulars in their history, they cannot be depended upon at all. But if there was any real foundation for this objection, we should give up all faith in history. For there is no period in any history, written by different persons, but several events have been differently represented; and yet it is not *fact* that our faith in history is shaken by this circumstance.

To use an example: some cotemporary historians say that, in the battle of Marston Moor, prince Rupert commanded in the *right* wing, while others place him in the *left*; and they give a different account of several incidents in that engagement, depending upon that position. But though, on this account, it should

should not be in our power to determine in which of the wings it was that this general fought, does it therefore follow that there was no battle on Marston Moor, that the king's forces were not defeated in that battle, or even that the prince did not command in it? This will not be pretended.

In like manner, though it should be found that, according to one evangelist, Christ purged the temple on the day of his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, whereas, according to another of them, this was not done till the day after, will it therefore follow that we have no reason to believe that he did purge the temple at all? Or, because all the evangelists express the inscription which Pilate put upon the cross of Christ in different words, must we conclude that there was no inscription upon it, or that Christ was not crucified at all? And because the Evangelists seem to have had different ideas of the manner in which the resurrection of our Lord was announced to the apostles, and especially concerning the vision of angels on that occasion, will it follow that they were so far incompetent witnesses, that we have no reason to believe that there was a resurrection?

I appeal to any person's feelings, whether even the fullest conviction of such variations as these would tend to produce any incredulity with respect to facts of any consequence, in which all the accounts agree. The most perfect faith in all great events will admit of very great latitude with respect to smaller ones; so that there is no occasion to fix any *boundary* where certain persuasion terminates, and where uncertainty begins. In this respect the gospel history exactly resembles all other credible histories; and indeed, being equally addressed to the feelings of human beings, there can be no reason why there should be any difference between them in this respect.

It is alledged that there was a particular express promise made by our Lord to his apostles, that *the spirit of truth should lead them into all truth, and bring all things to their remembrance whatever he said unto them*, John xiv. 26. But both the reason of the thing, and the fact itself, may satisfy us, that this promise could only respect things of consequence, and probably (as the excellent author of the *Five Letters on Inspiration* supposes) such things as the apostles were not at that time able fully to comprehend, and therefore were most likely to forget. For, with respect to *particular expressions*, all the evangelists report our Lord's discourses with very great variations. And, provided the great end of our Lord's commission and doctrines was not injured by those different representation of things, no real harm could arise from them, and therefore no valuable end would have been gained by such an interposition of divine providence as would have prevented them. Agreeably, therefore, to all that we know, or can infer, concerning the rules of the divine proceeding, no such interposition would be granted.

I own that I lay a good deal of stress upon these considerations, and think that by giving up the opinion of the inspiration of the evangelists, *as writers*, we gain two very considerable advantages; the first is that we place the gospel history on the same unexceptionable footing with other credible histories, resting on *independent testimonies*, in consequence of their agreement in all things of importance, and appearing to be independent of each other, by their disagreement in things of no importance. In the second place, we, by this means, disencumber the evidence of the gospel history of many objections, insignificant indeed, in themselves, but rendered of the greatest magnitude, and even absolutely insuperable, by our professing to maintain the plenary inspiration of the scriptures. By this means, therefore, we secure, in the most effectual manner, the evidence of all the important facts in the gospel

gospel history; and the rest will either follow of course, or their credibility may be safely neglected.

For these reasons, I cannot but greatly disapprove of every plan of a harmony of the gospels which goes upon the supposition that those writers were incapable of relating the same story with any inconsistency in the circumstances of it, and especially that they all wrote in true chronological order, so that we are not at liberty even to transpose any part of their narratives. The learned Michaelis says, in his *Introduction to the study of the New Testament*, p. 210, "Ofiander is at the head of those who have discredited the gospel history by their harmonies. However, he went not so far as his successors, but sometimes departs from his principles." Dr. Macknight has pursued this plan of a harmony to its utmost extent; and yet his work seems, upon the whole, to have been very well received. But though, for these reasons, I cannot but exceedingly disapprove of his *harmony*, I think he is often very happy as a *commentator*.

It is hardly necessary to observe that in what I have advanced above, I am far from denying *all* inspiration; but only the universal and infallible inspiration of the scripture historians as *writers*. When the prophets, or apostles, worked miracles, or delivered prophecies, and other messages from God, they must have been inspired. Paul also seems to say, that he received his knowledge of the gospel, by a personal communication from Christ after his resurrection.

2. Other harmonists take it for granted that Luke is the most orderly and strictly chronological, of all the gospel historians, chiefly because, in the beginning of his gospel, he says that, having examined every thing with care, he proposed to write of them *in order* (κατά τάς). But admitting that by this phrase he really

really meant to express his attention to exact chronological order, it does not follow that he was qualified to execute this design with accuracy. Besides, there is no reason to think that he had that idea to the word, because it does not necessarily convey that meaning.

To judge by the history itself, it is evident that there are fewer marks of an orderly narrative in the gospel of Luke than in any of the other three; and his arrangement of the facts is, at the same time, the least probable in itself, and the least reconcileable to that of the rest. This will sufficiently appear by my own observations; but much more evidence of this kind than can well be stated in writing, must, I think, occur to any person who shall read the gospel of Luke with attention, and in comparison with the other gospels.

With respect to myself, I must acknowledge that the harmony of the gospels always appeared to me to be a subject of great *curiosity* indeed, and even of much *use*, and *importance*; but, at the same time, of so much *difficulty* and *uncertainty*, that I despaired of ever seeing the undertaking accomplished to any purpose; till I met with *Mr. Mann's Dissertations on the times of the birth and the death of Christ*. Finding in this treatise some fundamental errors in all preceding harmonies rectified, and the general *outline* of a quite new and better harmony laid down, I was led to consider the subject with some attention, and immediately set about the scheme of a harmony on his principles; and in the prosecution of this work, I was led to depart from his disposition of many particular events; though a variety of additional arguments occurred to me in support of his general hypothesis.

If I should be thought to have succeeded in this work better than the generality of my predecessors, I shall attribute it chiefly to
to

to the *mechanical methods* I made use of in the arrangement of it; which were as follow. I procured two printed copies of the gospels, and having cancelled one side of every sheet, I cut out all the separate histories, &c. in each gospel; and having a large table appropriated to that use, I placed all the corresponding parts opposite to each other, and in such an order as the comparison of them (which, when they were brought so near together, was exceedingly easy) directed.

In this loose order the whole harmony lay before me a considerable time, in which I kept reviewing it at my leisure, and changing the places of the several parts, till I was as well satisfied with the arrangement of them as the nature of the case would admit. I then fixed the places of all these separate papers, by pasting them, in the order in which they lay before me, upon different pieces of pasteboard, carefully numbered, and by this means, also, divided into sections.

When I had done this, I published a *general view of my Harmony*, with the principal reasons on which it was founded, in the *Theological Repository*, which I then conducted, that my friends, and the public in general, might form a judgment of it. This was in the years 1769 and 1770; and since that time no material objection, that has come to my knowledge, has been made to it. However, preserving my paste boards, I have reviewed them occasionally, and, as it was still not difficult to do it, have transposed some of the parts to what I have thought to be more convenient places.

I will venture to say that, by the help of such a mechanical contrivance as this, a person of a very moderate capacity, or critical skill, will have an advantage over a person of the greatest genius and comprehension of mind without it. For, by this means, the things to be compared are brought under the eye at the same
d time,

time, and may be removed from one situation to another without trouble; so that every thing may be viewed, to all possible advantage, in every light, and nothing can escape, perplex, or distract the attention. Whereas, when a person takes the several gospels as they lie in our printed books, he not only loses time, in turning to the parallel passages, and in considering how they will stand in new connections; but, not being able to carry in his mind all the circumstances that demand his attention at the same time, he will be in great danger of being bewildered, and consequently of forming a hasty judgment, on a confused and inadequate view of things. Whether other harmonists have had recourse to any method similar to this of mine I cannot tell; but from the result of their labours, I am inclined to think that few of them were possessed of such an advantage.

That I might not be biassed by a regard to any particular hypothesis, I resolutely avoided so much as looking into any harmony whatever, till I had nearly pleased myself with my own arrangement; beginning only with Mr. Mann's transposition of the 5th chapter of John, and neglecting even his outline of an harmony. But when I had done this, I carefully examined all the harmonies that I could meet with, and weighed all the reasons produced by the writers of them for their disposition of every fact of consequence. The result of this examination will now and then appear in the following *Observations*, though I have made as little parade as possible of this kind of reading.

There is a very great difference in the manner of *disposing* and *printing* the different harmonies of the gospel, and each of them may have their peculiar uses. Mine will also be considerably different from any other that I have seen, and I flatter myself it will not be without its advantages. I have printed in a *larger character* what appears to me to be the most authentic,

tic, and the most circumstantial account of every important incident, collected from all the gospels promiscuously, placing the parallel accounts in separate columns, printed in a *smaller character*. By this means any person who would chuse to read *the whole history*, without interruption, may confine himself to the larger character, having recourse to the columns, printed in the smaller character only when he has occasion to compare the different accounts of the same thing.

The reasons for my choice of particular histories for the larger character may not always appear at first sight, but I have generally, all other circumstances being equal, given this preference to the gospel of John, and in the next place to that of Matthew, before those of Mark and Luke. Where an authority in general is of an inferior kind, I have sometimes given this preference to it, when the account has been much fuller and more circumstantial. But more frequently I have followed the best authority as far as it would go, and have taken from the inferior ones whatever was wanting to make it complete. In many cases, however, my choice was nearly balanced, and as the columns are printed, any person may please himself with considering that as the principal account of any discourse or transaction to which he himself shall give the preference.

N. B. For the use of those who will chuse to read the gospels in the *original*, this harmony will be printed in Greek as well as in English. But for the sake of common readers, the *Observations*, and the *English harmony*, accompanied with *illustrations of the difficult passages*, will be sold without the Greek.

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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

HARMONY of the EVANGELISTS.

SECTION I.

On the Time of the Birth of Christ.

THE time of the *birth* of Christ is not a subject of much importance, because no other very considerable event is connected with it; but the time of his *death* is of much moment in chronology, as the dates of many other great events depend upon it. Both of them, however, have, from their relation to the history of christianity, been the objects of laborious investigations by many critics and chronologers.

Without pretending to have taken so much pains with the subject as many others (though I have carefully attended to what has been advanced by those who have preceded me in this discussion) I shall briefly recite the sum of the evidence in favour of those dates to which I am inclined to give the preference;

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rence; which are the year 7 before the commencement of the common christian æra, U.C. 747. P. J. 4707 for the birth of Christ, and A. D. 29. U.C. 782. P. J. 4742 for the death of Christ.

According to Luke, Christ was born at a time when there was a general register, or polling (*απογραφη*) of the Jewish nation by the order of Augustus. This the Romans called a *census*, and the Ancyran marbles say that Augustus took the census of the Romans three times, the first time with his colleague Agrippa, in the year corresponding to 28 B. C. the second in the year 8 B. C. in the consulship of *Censorinus* and *Afinius*, as Lipsius and others explain it; and the third time with Tiberius, in the year 14 after Christ.

The second of these census's being the only one for our present purpose, it is evident that our Lord could not have been born before the year 8 B. C. The last census is evidently out of the question, because, according to Matthew, our Lord was born before the death of King Herod.

This census was taken by Quirinius, who was afterwards governor of Syria; but at a time when Sentius Saturninus was governor of that province. For this we have the testimony of Tertullian, who appeals to the records of the Roman empire. His words are, *Sed et census constat actos sub Augusto, per Sentium Saturninum, apud quos genus ejus inquirere potuissent.* As this Quirinius afterwards took another census of Judea, viz. upon the death of Archelaus, Luke distinguishes the two, by calling this the *first census that was taken by this governor*, as Dr. Lardner, with great probability, renders the passage; *αυτη η απογραφη πρωτη εγενετο ηγεμενου αυτου της Συριας Κυρηνιου.* Luke ii. 2.

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As this census was taken at Rome, in the year 8 B. C. it seems probable that it was not taken in the distant provinces till the year 7 B. C. And for this another reason will be suggested presently.

The birth of Christ could not be *later* than this date, viz. 7 B. C. because, as is inferred from some Syrian coins, produced by Cardinal Noris, Varus, who succeeded Saturninus, was governor of Syria the year following. See *Mann's Dissertations*, p. 64.

It was the general opinion of the christian Fathers that Christ was born when all the world was at peace, which was the case in the year 8 B. C. and Orosius says that the temple of Janus continued shut (*i. e.* that the peace lasted) twelve years. Now Augustus, who was proclaimed Emperor upon every victory, was proclaimed Emperor the fifteenth time twelve years after this date, so that it is probable that this peace had commenced with that year. See *Magnan*.

It is thought probable, from many circumstances (for which see Mann and Magnan) that the Magi visited Judea in the year 6 B. C.; and as Herod's order for the execution of the infants comprehended those from two years old and under, it may be presumed that this tyrant, in order to make sure of his victim, would take in a year more than was absolutely necessary; and on this account it is more probable that the year 7 B. C. is the true date of the birth of Christ, than the year 8 B. C.

It has been pretty sufficiently proved by Dr. Lardner and Magnan, that Herod died in the year 4 before Christ. This is also inferred from the computation of an eclipse of the moon, which Josephus says (*Ant. Lib. 17, cap. 8*) happened in Herod's last illness, and which has been found to have been

on the 13th of March in this year. Upon this event Christ returned from Egypt, and there is a tradition that he stayed there two years; which, allowing for the journey, the visit of the Magi, and other circumstances, almost fixes the date to the year 7 B. C.

Luke says that when Christ was baptized he was *about* (*ὡς*) *thirty years of age*; but as this is by no means a definite expression, it will agree well enough with his baptism falling on the year 28, as he would then be thirty-five.

The *time of the year* in which the course of Abia, of which Zacharias was, affords a *datum* for the time of the conception of John the Baptist, and consequently for the birth of Christ. From the time of David, the priests were divided into twenty-four courses, to attend the service of the temple in their turns, each serving a week at a time. After the return from Babylon the number of courses was still twenty-four; and the temple being set on fire in the course of Joiarib, in the month *Ab*, or August, according to Josephus, Mr. Whiston (see his *Harmony*, p. 158) computes that the course of Abia fell in September. Concluding, therefore, that John the Baptist was conceived in the beginning of September, he supposes that our Saviour must have been born about the latter end of October in the year following. For as soon as Elizabeth had conceived she hid herself five Jewish months, and immediately after that, or in the beginning of the sixth month, the Virgin Mary conceived Christ. This must have been about the end of January, and nine months afterwards, *viz.* the latter end of October, in the same year, it is most probable that he was born.

THAT

SECTION II.

On the Time of the Death of Christ.

THAT Christ died in the year 29, when the two *Gemini* were consuls, is so expressly asserted by several of the ancient fathers, persons who lived nearest to the time of Christ, and who were under no imaginable bias to depart from the truth, that I do not see how it can well be called in question; especially as this date is sufficiently consistent with every other criterion by which it can be determined. I shall briefly recite this evidence chiefly from Mr. Le Clerc, to whose first dissertation, subjoined to his *Harmony*, I refer my reader for the words of the originals.

Clemens Alexandrinus says that Christ suffered in the 15th year of Tiberius, forty-two years and three months before the destruction of Jerusalem. Now Augustus dying in August, A. D. 14, the remainder of that year may be ascribed either to him, or to Tiberius; and therefore the same year may, by different persons, be called the 15th or the 16th of Tiberius.

Julius Africanus also says that Christ suffered in the 15th year of Tiberius.

Origen evidently had the same opinion with Clemens Alexandrinus, as may be inferred from his saying, after him, that Christ was crucified forty-two years before the destruction of Jerusalem.

Tertullian

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Tertullian is more express; saying that Christ suffered in the 15th year of Tiberius, Rubellius Geminus, and Fusius Geminus being consuls, before the 7th (in some copies the 10th, in others the 17th) of the calends of April, and in another place after the 10th of the calends of April.

Some of the primitive christians were so fully persuaded that Christ suffered on the 8th of the calends of April, i. e. on the 25th of March, that they would always keep their Easter on that day. See *Walch's explanation of the decree of the council of Nice, concerning the time of keeping Easter. Novi Commentarii Gotten- gensis, vol. 1. p. 36.* This agreeing with Tertullian, leads us to imagine that those christians, whoever they were, had the same opinion with him concerning the year of the passion.

Lastly, Sulpicius Severus says that Christ suffered when Fusius Geminus, and Rubellius Geminus were consuls.

As this evidence stands uncontradicted by any thing in antiquity, I do not see how any person at this day can reasonably object to it.

What may be principally alledged against this date is, that, according to the rules for fixing Easter, the passover will not fall on a Friday for that year. But in this several things are taken for granted, and especially that the Jews computed precisely as we do, and with the same exactness; neither of which is at all probable. The modern Jews give very different accounts of the custom of those antient times in this respect, and certainly no exact rule can be deduced from what Josephus or Philo say on this subject.

Josephus says that the passover was to be kept on the 14th day of the month Nisan, according to the moon, (*κατὰ σελήνην*).

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But from this nothing can be inferred but that the Jewish year was a *lunar* one; and notwithstanding this, it might be regulated by a very inaccurate cycle.

Philo says that the feast of passover was to be kept on the 14th of Nisan, *when the moon's orb would be near to being full* (μελλοντος τε σεληνιακης κυκλις γενεσθαι πλησικροεως) but this admits of its being a little before, though perhaps not a little after, the full moon. *Mann's Dissertation*, p. 195.

Nay it may, I think, be inferred from this writer's expressing himself in this manner, that the antient Jewish rule for fixing the time of passover was not what it is now generally supposed to have been, *viz.* that it was always *on the very day of the full moon*. Had this been their invariable rule, he could never have said that it fell on a day when the moon was only *near* to being full. It is evident from this that the Jews made use of a method which admitted of some latitude in this respect, and how much we cannot tell.

It is even certain, from the facts that may be collected from the controversy concerning the time of keeping Easter in the christian Church, that the Jews did not observe the equinox, that even the Latins, for several centuries, celebrated Easter in such a manner that the full moon which regulated it was sometimes before the equinox, that the present rule of fixing it, so that it is always *after* the equinox, was only contrived by Dionysius Alexandrinus in the third century, after the example of some Jews only; and that the Jews in general were not exact in observing the equinox till the fourth century. For the proof of these particulars I refer to the dissertation of the learned Mr. Walch above mentioned in the *Novi Commentarii Societatis Gottingensis*, p. 10.

Some

Some have contended that the Jews determined the beginning of every month by the actual observation of the new moon. But this is an opinion that I think has been sufficiently confuted by Mr. Mann. See his *Dissertation*, p. 192.

The oldest writer who has given us any account of the Jewish method of fixing the time of passover is Epiphanius, and Mr. Le Clerc informs us that, according to a cycle composed from this writer, partly by Kepler, and partly by Petavius, the passover of the year 29 fell on the 25th of March, which, Mr. Le Clerc says, was a Thursday. But Mr. Ferguson's tables make it to have been a Friday. Otherwise, this computation would, in my opinion, correspond to the account of the Evangelists. Whereas Mr. Mann and most others, who assign different dates to this event, and observe the present methods of fixing the time of Easter, all suppose the passover of the year of crucifixion to have been on a Friday.

I find, that the full moon of the year 29 B. C. fell on the 18th of March, so that according to the opinion adopted by Mr. Le Clerc, the passover must have been almost a whole week after the full moon; and though it is impossible to say that the old Jewish cycle was more exact than this, it must be acknowledged not to be very probable. And yet the evidence of Tertullian, and those primitive christians above mentioned, who kept their *Easter* on the 25th of March, is in favour of the latter of these two weeks, viz. before the 7th of the calends of April, i. e. before the 26th of March, and after the 10th of the calends, i. e. 23d of March. And a council assembled at Caesarea in Palestine upon the question of keeping Easter, in 195, say that the crucifixion was on the 11th of the calends of April or the 22d of March. See Mann, p. 205. Now the Friday in that week was on the 25th of March. And though we may presume that, in general, the Jews, as well as other nations, whose year was

was luni-solar, began their months about the time of new moon (so that the full moon would fall about the 15th day) it is plain from Reland's *Jewish Antiquities*, that the Jews did not observe this rule with any strictness; for then their months would always have been alternately of 29 and 30 days. Whereas, according to his account of their calendar, p. 244, they had sometimes 8 months of 30 days, with 4 of 29; and sometimes 8 of 29 days, with 4 of 30; or with any intermediate proportion. Now this is inconsistent with their beginning every month with a new moon, and how far they might depart from that rule, one way or the other, we cannot tell.

If, rejecting the rule deduced from Epiphanius, we keep to the present rule, which never admits of the passover to have fallen a single day before the equinox, we must carry the passover of this year to the 17th of April, which is expressly contrary to all the evidence of Tertullian and of the council.

It is remarkable enough, however, that it is only taking the week before this, in the same month, and the day of full moon itself falls on a Friday. For the 18th of March was on that day of the week, and only two days before the equinox. And who can say that the Jewish cycle might not admit of the passover being fixed so near the equinox as two days before it, as well as some time after it; especially considering that the Jews of those times did not observe the equinox; no purpose of theirs requiring such exactness? For those, therefore, who will have the passover of the week of crucifixion to have fallen on a Friday, I should think this year to be sufficiently for their purpose. They who, with myself, prefer the Thursday, may take the same week, supposing that the 14th day of the month might fall one day before the full moon; which, according to Reland's account of the Jewish calendar, was very possible; and if the Jews had any regard to the benefit of *moonlight*, they would chuse a day before

before the full moon, *viz.* the Thursday in that week, rather than five days after. Inclining to this hypothesis, on account of the full moon falling nearer to the middle of the month, I drew out the Jewish and Roman calendars for the time of Christ's ministry according to it, which was easily done by allowing seven of the Jewish months in that year to have been *defective*, or to have consisted of no more than 29 days; and according to Reland they had sometimes eight such months in the year.

Accordingly, in that calendar which I have annexed, I have made the 14th of Nisan in the year 29 to correspond to the 17th of March. But the 14th of Nisan may be made to coincide with the 18th of March (to suit the opinion of those who suppose the passover in the week of crucifixion to have been on a Friday) by only making one less defective month in the year.

Several persons who have endeavoured to fix the time of the death of Christ, have availed themselves of what the Jews observed to our Saviour at the time that he was purging the temple, *viz.* that *it had been 46 years in building* or, as it may be rendered, that it had been built (*ωκοδομηθη*) 46 years, John ii. 20. The computations relating to this question have been made so variously, and the facts referred to have so much uncertainty attending them, that I own it affords no sufficient argument for any particular date of the transaction. I shall subjoin, however, what Mr. Whiston says upon the subject, and it will be allowed to have somewhat more weight, as this writer assigns a much later date for the death of Christ than I do, supposing the temple to have been cleansed at a preceding passover.

“ Josephus assures us that the *ναος*, or temple, was begun in
 “ the eighteenth year of the reign of Herod (which in such cases
 “ he always reckons from the death of Antigonus) and that it
 “ continued for a year and six months, and then was finished.
 “ Now from these circumstances we may certainly find the year
 “ we

" we inquire for. Antigonus was slain about July, A. P. J.
 " 4677; and so Herod's eighteenth year must begin about July,
 " 4694, and continue till July, 4695. Let us suppose the tem-
 " ple begun about the feast of tabernacles in this eighteenth year
 " Tifri, 4694. Add a year and six months, the space in which
 " it was building, and it will appear to have been finished at the
 " passover Nisan, 4696. From this passover let us count 46
 " years, and this will bring us to the passover we inquire for,
 " Nisan 4742, which is A. D. 29." Whiston's *Harmony*, 144.

I have carefully considered all Dr. Whitby's objections to this computation of Mr. Whiston (*Paraphrase*, vol. 1. p. 497) and think them to be of no weight, especially that on which he lays the greatest stress, viz. that the outer buildings were erected before the proper temple (*ναός*) which was built by the priests. I infer from the passage that he himself quotes from Josephus, that though Herod was eight years in completing the buildings which he superintended, the priests, who began at the same time, finished their part in one year and six months. I am still more surprised that such a critic as Dr. Whitby should say, as a reason why Herod must be supposed to have finished his undertaking first, that "the Jews would not suffer themselves to be
 " deprived of the benefit of their sacrifices for nine years and
 " an half, as they must have done, if the temple of the priests
 " had not been standing, and had not been dedicated till that
 " time"; when it is evident from Ezra iii. 3. that the Jews erected their altar, and sacrificed according to the law, immediately upon their return from the captivity, in the reign of Cyrus; though the temple was not built till the reign of Darius. Undoubtedly, therefore, there was no interruption of sacrifices on account of this building of the temple by Herod.

SECTION III.

Of Daniel's Prophecy of Seventy Weeks.

ALMOST all persons, I believe, who have attempted to ascertain the time of the birth, or of the death of Christ, have thought it necessary to make their hypotheses suit with the famous prophecy of Daniel concerning the *seventy weeks*, and I shall not be singular in supposing that their determination in favour of this or that time might be more or less biased by their interpretation of that prophecy.

For my own part, I can truly say that I always considered that prophecy as very obscure, on account of the uncertainty both of the *true reading*, and of the *interpretation*; and more especially after I had read the dissertation of the celebrated Mr. Michaelis upon it; according to which it can be of no use at all for determining the dates above mentioned. I had, therefore, fixed upon the dates I have supposed for the birth and death of Christ upon *historical considerations* only, without the least regard to this prophecy; and in this publication I had no design to make any use of it at all, till I met with *Mr. Blayney's Dissertation* upon that subject. This I perused with great satisfaction. For, though I still think there are several passages in the prophecy which will admit of farther illustration, and I cannot approve of his version in all respects, this excellent critic appears to me to have thrown great light upon it. He, therefore, drew my attention more particularly to the subject, after I had not only completely settled my plan of the Harmony, but even composed the whole of the preceding section.

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In this state of mind, it was certainly natural to endeavour to find such an interpretation of the prophecy as would agree with those dates, which historical considerations had induced me to fix upon. As I frankly acknowledge these views, and that I should never have thought of the following interpretation of this famous prophecy, unless I had previously fixed the dates which I suppose to be referred to in it, the reader will make what allowance he thinks proper for this bias.

Mr. Blayney's translation of the whole prophecy is as follows, p. 67.

“ Seventy, seventy years of rest (or desolation) have been
 “ upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to check the
 “ revolt, and to put an end to sins, and to make atonement
 “ for iniquity, and to bring again the righteousness of ancient
 “ times, and to seal (that is, authenticate) the divine oracle, and
 “ the prophet, and to anoint (that is, sanctify anew) the
 “ most holy things.

“ And thou shalt know and understand, that from the going
 “ forth of a decree to rebuild Jerusalem unto the Messiah the
 “ prince, shall be seventy and seven weeks, and threescore and
 “ two years; it shall be rebuilt, still enlarging itself, and becoming
 “ more and more considerable, even amidst times of distress.

“ And after the times seventy-seven and threescore and two,
 “ Messiah shall cut off from belonging to him both the city
 “ and the sanctuary; the prince that shall come shall destroy
 “ the people; and the cutting off thereof shall be with a flood;
 “ (that is a hostile invasion) and unto the end of a war, carried
 “ on with rapidity, shall be desolations.

“ But

“ But he shall confirm a covenant (or make a firm covenant)
 “ with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he
 “ shall cause the sacrifice and meat offering to cease; and the
 “ abomination of desolation shall be upon the border; (that is,
 “ encompassing and pressing close upon the city and the temple)
 “ and an utter end, even a speedy one, (or, even until an utter
 “ end, and that a speedy one) shall be poured upon the deso-
 “ lated.”

This translation I very much approve in general, but I take the liberty to differ from the excellent author in some parts of it, as well as in his *interpretation* of it.

The capital advantage of Mr. Blayney's interpretation consists in his supposing that the first part of the Angel's address to Daniel referred to the seventy years captivity, and that they are not any part of the prophecy, as all other interpreters have imagined. But for this purpose he had no occasion to make the word נהרך a substantive, and translate it *rest*, for which he has by no means, as I think, advanced sufficient reasons. It appears to me more natural to translate that word as it is done in our version, and most of the antient ones, *viz. determined, or marked out*. But the *sense* that Mr. Blayney affixes to this clause is sufficiently justified by a regard to the subject of Daniel's prayer and anxiety which preceded this remarkable vision.

Daniel says (Chap. ix. 2.) that in the year in which he had this vision, which was *the first of Darius the Mede, he had understood by books the number of the years whereof the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem*; and after a confession of the sins of his people he intreats v. 16, 17, that God would turn away his fury from the city Jerusalem, and that he would cause his face to shine upon the sanctuary which was desolate. Whilst he was yet speaking the angel accosts him; and referring,

ring, with the greatest propriety, to the subject of his prayer, informs him that the seventy years desolation of Jerusalem, which had been the subject of his thoughts, must be fulfilled, to punish his people for their sins, to bring them back to the piety of their ancestors, and to verify the prophecy of Jeremiah; and till that period, which was absolutely determined in the decree of God, the sanctuary must continue to lie desolate: but that from that period other more favourable events, the subject of the ensuing prophecy, would take place.

In his interpretation Mr. Blayney supposes the seventy years of rest, or desolation, to have been past about the time of the vision, viz. 536 B.C. and from that year, which was the same in which the Babylonian empire was overthrown by Cyrus, he dates the seventy-seven weeks, or 539 years to the birth of Christ: for thus he interprets the expression, *to Messiah the prince*. He places this event four years before the christian æra, and from this he dates the 62 years, to terminate at the commencement of the Jewish war in 66, or the second coming of Christ, to the destruction of Jerusalem. And in the middle of the last week of this period, or between the years 66 and 73, the daily sacrifice ceased in the temple, a little before the final destruction of it.

To prepare the way for my interpretation, I would beg leave to divide the sentence in the second paragraph of Mr. Blayney's translation in a manner different from his; but I flatter myself that, independent of any particular interpretation, it will be thought more natural, especially as it gives a date to an event mentioned immediately afterwards, which, according to Mr. Blayney, has no date at all. Instead therefore of reading as he does, that "from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem unto the
"Messiah the prince shall be seventy and seven weeks and three-
"score and two years," I would connect this latter term of
years

years with the following sentence ; reading thus, *and in three-score and two years it shall be rebuilt, &c.* As to the insertion of the particle *in* before a noun of number, I think it requires no apology, as in all languages particles of that import are frequently understood.

Farther, it appears to me that the mere *birth* of Christ, which produced no change in the face of the world, was not of itself of sufficient consequence to be announced, in this prophecy, in the manner that Mr. Blayney (and indeed almost every other interpreter) supposes. I therefore think that the period distinguished in this very particular manner, *unto the Messiah the prince*, refers to our Lord's entering upon his office of *public instructor*, the time in which his *divine commission*, and *princely power*, his appearing *in the form of God*, and especially his being *declared to be the son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead* actually took place. This was a period respecting the Messiah which was certainly distinguished in the annals of providence in the most illustrious manner ; being, without all dispute, the most important period from the beginning of the world to the final consummation of all things.

Now from this most remarkable year 29, there were exactly 77 weeks of years, or 539 years, to the year 510 B.C. in which, and not before, by the order of Darius Hystaspes, the decree of Cyrus, empowering the Jews to return to their country and rebuild the temple, was actually executed. This therefore appears to me to be a more important æra in the Jewish history than that of the decree of Cyrus. Under Cyrus there was a mere order, but under Darius the same order renewed, attended with sufficient power to carry it into execution.

Besides, it is to be observed, that the prophecy leaves us at liberty to fix upon *any decree*, that was made for this purpose, and

and therefore Mr. Blayney, with great propriety, renders it, *and from a decree.*

That the term of the 70 years captivity was expired at the time of the vision, as Mr. Blayney's translation implies, cannot be strictly true; for the Jews were then at Babylon, and there was not even a decree in their favour till the reign of Cyrus, which succeeded that of Darius the Mede, in the very first year of which was this vision. There is, therefore, on this account, a peculiar propriety in the old translation of the word נחתך *are determined* or decreed, and therefore must have their accomplishment.

I also see no necessity to suppose that the words *restore* and *rebuild*, should be understood literally, of the rebuilding the walls of the town, but figuratively, as they are frequently applied, meaning the restoration of the civil polity of the Jewish nation. Besides, the words may be applied to the actual building of the *temple* at Jerusalem, which was accomplished under Darius Hystaspes only; and this was an event of much more importance than the walls of the city: and from this building of the temple, the *passover*, which was the most important of all the Jewish feasts, and the rule for all the rest, began to be celebrated, after the interruption occasioned by the Babylonish captivity. See Ezra vi. 9.

It may also be said that, in computing the proper time of the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, some account ought to be taken of the second return under Ezra, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, that is in 458, or rather 448 B.C. and if so, the mean date of the return will fall somewhere between the return under Cyrus and that under Artaxerxes, and therefore may conveniently enough be fixed for the reign of Darius.

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It is worthy of particular consideration, that, according to the tenor of this famous prophecy, the commencement of the period of seventy-seven weeks coincides with the expiration of the lesser period of seventy years of desolation; and if these commence, as any person would naturally imagine, at the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, when only an end was put to the civil and ecclesiastical polity of the Jews, the termination falls precisely on the date of the edict of Darius, the former happening in the year 580 B.C. and the latter in the year 510.

To date the commencement of the seventy years captivity from the reign of Jehoiakim, when it took place only very partially, and when the temple was standing, all the forms of the Jewish religion kept up, and Jewish kings reigning in Jerusalem several years after, appears to me to have been adopted too hastily by most, if not all commentators who have written on the subject, from not attending to any other date for the expiration of these seventy years than the mere decree of Cyrus.

I date the seventy years captivity from the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem, when the calamities of the Jewish nation began, and not from the actual destruction of it, which was two years afterwards; but this appears to me sufficiently near the truth, and as the prophecy is delivered in whole numbers, it cannot but be deemed quite sufficient that the completion terminate at the nearest whole number. Indeed no commentators think themselves absolutely bound to greater exactness.

Besides the building of the temple was not actually completed, and the edifice dedicated, till the seventh year of Darius, or 505 B.C.; so that taking the middle between these two terms, from 510, when the building was commenced, to 505, (*viz.*)

(viz.) 507¹ B. C. for the building of the temple, we may date the 70 years captivity from the actual demolition of the temple, and the final destruction of Jerusalem.

That the seventy years *captivity*, as it is generally called, or more properly, the seventy years *desolation of Jerusalem*, and more especially of the temple, did not expire till the reign of Darius Hystaspes, may, I think, with certainty be inferred from Zachariah i. 12. This prophet had a vision (an account of which is given in this chapter) in the second year of Darius, the very year in which his decree to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem was made; and in this vision an angel of the Lord is represented as saying, *O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?* I cannot help thinking this to be decisive in favour of the seventy years captivity, or desolation, having terminated in the reign of Darius Hystaspes, and consequently of their having commenced at the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar; and therefore that it is from the decree of Darius that we are to date whatever is foretold in this famous prophecy of Daniel.

In the preceding computation I suppose an error of ten years in the time allotted by all chronologers to the reign of Xerxes. But this I think has been sufficiently proved by Mr. Lauchlan Taylor, in his *Essay on the Revelation*, viz. that in reality, he did not reign more than eleven years, though the canon of Ptolemy gives him twenty one. This appears to me to be a discovery of so much consequence in chronology, and especially for the interpretation of prophecy, that I shall subjoin all that he has said upon this subject in a distinct section; and I am the more induced to do this, as I believe Mr. Taylor's book is not much known in England.

I also think there is a pretty plausible ground for dating the 62 years, after which the city should be rebuilt, from the decree of Darius in 510 B.C. when I find, in Prideaux's tables, that from this time to the actual rebuilding of the city under Nehemiah in 445 B.C. there is 65 years (allowing for the error above mentioned in the intervening reign of Xerxes), and assuming the middle date for the rebuilding of the temple above mentioned, this period will be exactly 62 years; the difference at least not exceeding half a year.

Instead of supposing, with Mr. Blayney, and most others, that the time when the Messiah should cut off the city and sanctuary is to be dated from the *commencement* of the Jewish war, in the year 66, I suppose the *completion* of it to be intended in the prophecy, or the year 73; and it is remarkable enough that from the time of this vision, in the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede (which immediately succeeded the taking of Babylon by the Medes and Persians) and which corresponds to the year 538, or with the correction above mentioned 528 B.C. to this date, were exactly 77 weeks of years, and 62 single years, or 601 years. And it is observable that in this part of the prophecy these periods of years, which are repeated from the preceding part of the prophecy, are not said to commence from the *æra* of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem. It is only said that *after the times 77 and 62 Messiah shall cut off, &c.* These two periods, and not a different one, comprehending them both, was probably made use of for the easier recollection of them on account of the same numbers having been used just before, though commencing from a different date.

The last week I make to be the very same with Mr. Blayney, supposing the termination of it to be in the year 73, and that in the middle of this week the Messiah did actually cause

cause the sacrifice and meat offering to cease, by the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem.

For greater distinctness, I shall subjoin a short paraphrase of this prophecy, with my interpretation intermixed with it.

Seventy, I say, seventy years of desolation, commencing at the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, and ending at the rebuilding of the temple under Darius, are decreed upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to check the revolt, to bring again the righteousness of antient times, and to fulfil the prophecy of Jeremiah. Till this period be expired, the sanctuary must continue to lie desolate.

And thou shalt know and understand, that from the going forth of this decree of Darius to restore Jerusalem, unto the time that the Messiah shall appear in his princely power, with his commission from God, to preach the glad tidings of the gospel, shall be 77 weeks of years, or 539 years; but that after threescore and two years from the same decree, the city itself shall be actually rebuilt, with its walls and gates; and it shall enlarge itself, and become more and more considerable even amidst times of distress.

Also, after the same periods of years which have been just mentioned, viz. 77 weeks of years, and 62 single years, in all 601 years reckoned from the present time, Messiah, who on his first appearance will be rejected by the Jews, shall reject them from being his people, and shall have completely cut off both the city and the sanctuary. And the Romans whom he shall employ to execute his just vengeance, shall destroy the people, and this destruction shall be most rapid and complete.

In

In the last week of this whole term, or the last seven years, preceding the year 73, the Messiah shall confirm a covenant with many; numbers adhering to his cause, and being rescued by him from impending destruction. And in the midst of this dreadful week, that is, in the year 70, he shall cause the sacrifice and meat offering to cease, in the utter destruction of the temple and the city; the abomination of desolation shall be in the temple itself, and an utter and speedy end will be put to the whole of the Jewish constitution. See *Michaelis* on this part of the prophecy.

New as this interpretation is, in almost all its parts, I hope that, in a speculation of so much difficulty, the reader will not reject it on that account. Since the conjectures of learned men relating to this remarkable prophecy have been so very different, there is, certainly, less reason for attaching ourselves to any one of them, and more reason for giving due attention to others.

The reader will please to take notice that, in the preceding computations, I have made use of Prideaux's chronological tables, subjoined to his *Connexion*, than which nothing can be more unexceptionable.

For yet greater distinctness, I shall subjoin a chronological table of all the dates referred to in the preceding interpretation (corrected by deducting ten years from the reign of Xerxes) and a view of all the periods.

HARMONY OF THE EVANGELISTS.

23

	B.C.		
Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem	580	70 years captivity	77 weeks, and 62 years, or 691 years
He destroys the city and temple	578		
The commencement of the empire of Darius the Mede, in the year of the vision	528		
The building of the temple resumed by order of Darius Hystaspes	510	71 weeks, or 535 years	
The middle term between the commencement and finishing of it	507		
Nehemiah rebuilds the walls of Jerusalem by order of Artaxerxes	445		
	A.D.		
The year of Christ's death	29	a week, or 7 years	
The commencement of the Jewish war	66		
The destruction of the temple in the middle of the war between 66 and 73	70		
The termination of the war	73		

SECTION

SECTION IV.

Mr. Lauchlan Taylor's Observations concerning the Length of the Reign of Xerxes, from his Essay on some Passages in the Revelation, &c. p. 191, &c.

“**T**HERE are considerable differences among chronologers concerning the length of the reign of Xerxes. Diodorus, and the chronologers who have followed him, affirming that Xerxes reigned twenty years before the reign of his son Artaxerxes commenced; whereas Petavius hath offered a proof, from the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides, that Artaxerxes began his reign in the twelfth year of the reign of his father Xerxes, he having been (as he supposes) then admitted by him into an equal share of the government with himself. The authorities upon which Petavius grounds his opinion are, beyond all question, superior to that of Diodorus in point of antiquity; as both the above-mentioned historians wrote not long after the period in question. Let us therefore examine their writings with the utmost accuracy, that we may see what light these ancient authors throw upon the subject.”

“Herodotus, who was born in the reign of Xerxes, relates, L. VII. C. 20. that, in the beginning of the fifth year of his reign, Xerxes entered upon his Grecian expedition, by marching his numerous armies towards Sardis, and that he took up his winter quarters there. Consequently, his passage over the Hellespont, which happened the spring following, and the defeat of his navy at Salamis by Themistocles, in
October

October following, must have been in the sixth year of his reign; and the defeat of his army under the command of Mardonius, by the Lacedemonians and Athenians at the battle of Platea, (which, according to all historians, happened in the September following) must have been in the seventh year of his reign. The year following, *viz.* the eight of Xerxes, Thucydides tells us L. 1. S. 94, that the Grecian fleet under the command of Pausanias the Lacedemonian, invaded Cyprus, and overthrew many cities; that after this expedition, Pausanias besieged and took Byzantium, (which must have happened the year after the expedition against Cyprus, and in the ninth year of Xerxes); that, immediately after this success, he entered upon a treasonable correspondence with Xerxes; and having for some time behaved very haughtily, the confederates accused him of affecting a princely dominion: that upon this he was recalled by the Spartans; and, though he was absolved from the crime of treason, yet, that the Spartans would not restore him to his former command, but allowed it to be given by the confederates to the Athenian generals. This must have happened in the tenth year of Xerxes. He then relates, that although Pausanias was not intrusted with any public command; yet, that he might be in a condition to effect his treasonable designs, he set out in an armed ship for Byzantium; but, being driven from thence by the Athenians, he fixed his residence about Troy: that the Spartans receiving intelligence of his treasonable machinations there, sent one of their officers to bring him home; and that, some time after his return, his treachery being fully proved, he was starved death. This (it is highly probable) happened in the eleventh year of Xerxes's reign. Immediately after the discovery of the treasonable practices of Pausanias and his death, the Spartans (as Thucydides relates) accused Themistocles of being one of his associates, and offered a proof thereof; and that Themistocles, not chusing to stand a trial, fled, first to Corcyra, afterwards to the king of the Molossi, and last of all to Ephesus, where, he tells us, Themistocles wrote a petition

to the king of Persia (whom Thucydides expressly calls Artaxerxes) and who, as he says, began his reign a very little before that time; and consequently the above accusation against Themistocles, and the greatest part of the time which he spent in his flight, appears to have happened in the eleventh and last year of Xerxes's reign, and the first year of the reign of Artaxerxes."

"Petavius was of opinion, that, after this period, Xerxes reigned for several years jointly with his son Artaxerxes. But, though it must be allowed that sometimes the Babylonian and Persian kings did admit their sons into an equal share of the government with themselves, yet this seems only to have been the case, when the father had been the first king of his family, or when, through the infirmities of old age, they found themselves incapable to conduct the affairs of government without a partner. Thus Nabopolassar, in his old age, admitted his son Nebuchadnezzar to the throne before his death; and also Darius, in the decline of life, admitted his son Xerxes to the same honour, that the succession in their posterity might continue without opposition, especially as the fathers themselves had been the first kings of their families. But, since the succession had been established in the person of Xerxes, there appears to have been no reason for suspecting that it would be questioned with respect to his son Artaxerxes; and it is evident that Xerxes was not old in the eleventh year of his reign, as he was born after his father ascended the throne. The learned Petavius (as I formerly observed) is of opinion that the flight of Themistocles happened in the twelfth year of Xerxes's reign; and that he might reconcile the history of Thucydides with the annals of Diodorus (who makes Xerxes to have reigned only one year with his father, and twenty without a partner) he supposes that Artaxerxes had been raised to the throne by his father several years before his father's death."

"It

" It is indeed universally agreed that Xerxes was advanced by his father Darius to an equal share of the government with himself; but the time when this happened is not certain; and this is not much to be wondered at, since it is generally acknowledged, that the first Grecian histories were written in the reign of Darius, and consequently, these being composed in an age only emerging from ignorance and fable, must have been very imperfect. It is rather more probable, as Darius was much advanced in life before his Scythian expedition, that prior to his entering upon it, he raised his son Xerxes to the throne, that he might maintain the government during his absence, and that, whatever calamities might befall him in that dangerous war, at such a distance from his dominions, he might secure the regal power to his descendants. His Scythian expedition was finished some time before the battle of Marathon, which was fought five years before the death of Darius, according to Herodotus; we may therefore suppose, for the above reasons, that Xerxes began to reign nine years before his father's death, and these added to his twelve years reign without a partner will make his whole reign to have been twenty-one years (which supposing them to have been marked in the public registers of the empire) might have occasioned the mistake of Diodorus. But, whatever there may be in this, yet, as Diodorus lived four hundred years after Thucydides, we ought, in all reason, to prefer the authority of the last-mentioned writer, who, as Cornelius Nepos observes, lived the nearest to Themistocles of all those who have wrote the history of these times, and was also of the same city. And it is very observable he not only declares that, after Themistocles fled to Ephesus, he sent a petition to Artaxerxes; but, in that petition he claimed the merit of signal services which he had done to Xerxes after his defeat at Salamis, without making any appeal to Xerxes himself, which he certainly would have done if Xerxes had been alive, and possessed of an equal share of the government with his son. I know, that the annals of the

Athenian Archons, in the Oxford marbles, and those of others, make a much longer time from the defeat of Xerxes to the flight of Themistocles; but, as they have been found incorrect in several instances, even by their greatest admirers, so none of these authors can be ranked with Thucydides either in respect of accuracy or antiquity."

" That Xerxes reigned only eleven years, and that the flight of Themistocles happened, mostly, in the first year of Artaxerxes, will also be confirmed by the following observations."

" 1st, As it is clear from the above, that the battle of Platea was fought in the seventh year of Xerxes, so Thucydides relates, that, after this defeat of the Medes at Platea, and afterwards in a sea-fight at Mycale, the Athenians (whose city had been destroyed before the battle, and who had betaken themselves to their ships) proceeded to the siege of Sestos; and, having taken that city, they passed the winter there, and that next summer they left the Hellespont, and, having brought with them their household furniture and goods, which they had conveyed to the neighbouring islands, when they were obliged to leave the city, they began a-new to rebuild their houses; and by the instigation, and under the conduct of Themistocles, in opposition to the remonstrances of the Spartans, to rebuild the walls of Athens, and to enlarge and fortify their naval harbour at the Pyraeum; which (although Thucydides says they were not long in finishing them) must have taken up probably more than two years. This brings us to the tenth year of Xerxes's reign, when we observed formerly, Pausanias was deprived of the command of the allied fleet, and it was given to the Athenians."

" 2^{dly}, Thucydides relates, that the command of the fleet being given by the confederates to the Athenians, in order
that

that they might prosecute the war more successfully against the Persians, they enacted, with the consent of their allies, that a tax should be paid by them; and Plutarch affirms, that Themistocles was employed to levy these taxes, and that he used force and great severity in executing that office. This, it would appear, happened in the tenth year of the reign of Xerxes."

"3dly, Plutarch further observes, that the great power which Themistocles had acquired, and the great severity which he had used, provoked the jealousy of his countrymen, and the ill-will of their allies to such a degree, that he was banished Athens, which must have happened a little before Pausanias was brought a second time to trial by the Spartans. And, as it appears from Thucydides, that this trial of Pausanias continued a long time, we must conceive, that it took up the greatest part, if not the whole, of the eleventh year of the reign of Xerxes. Thucydides also affirms that, immediately after the trial and death of Pausanias, Themistocles was accused by the Lacedæmonians, and that he saved himself from their persecutions by a long and dangerous flight."

"The latter part of the above computation is confirmed by what Thucydides observes, L. 1. S. 96, and 98, that after the Athenians had received from their confederates proper supplies for the equipment and maintenance of their fleets and armies (which happened, according to the above, in the tenth year of Xerxes) the only two naval expeditions of any consequence, in which they were engaged before the flight of Themistocles, were that against the Carystians in Eubæa, whom, after several engagements, they brought to terms, and that against Naxos, in which they were employed when Themistocles was making his escape to Ephesus. The first of these expeditions must have occupied them during the eleventh year of Xerxes's reign; especially if we consider, that, immediately

ately before this expedition, they had been engaged in plundering the island of Scyros, transporting the inhabitants, and in planting it with a colony of their own people. And Thucydides relates, that, when Themistocles, in his voyage to Ephesus, came in sight of the Athenian camp in the island of Naxos, he was greatly terrified, lest he should have fallen into their hands. Now, since it is evident, that, at this time, the Athenians and their confederates had not conquered that small island of Naxos, (which was at no great distance from them) we must conceive that it was either in the spring, or early in the summer, that Themistocles sailed by their fleet, and that he arrived at Ephesus some time before the end of the month of August, or the first day of the month Thoth; and, as Thucydides affirms, that Themistocles, upon his arrival at Ephesus, sent a letter to the king of Persia; so he expressly calls this prince *Artaxerxes*, who, he says, was the son of Xerxes, and had newly begun to reign. His words are, *νεωτῆς βασιλευμένης, L. 1 S. 137.*"

"From all these things put together, it is most probable, that Themistocles sent his letter before the month Thoth; and consequently, that Artaxerxes had begun his reign some time before that period. Now, as it is well known, that the Chaldean and Egyptian astronomers counted the reigns of their kings from the month Thoth; and that when any Prince began his reign, although it had been only a few days before that month began, yet these were accounted by them as the first year of his reign, and that when the month Thoth was commenced, it was reckoned by them as the beginning of the second year of his reign; so we have reason to conclude, from every view of the above-mentioned facts, that Xerxes reigned only eleven complete years, and that, according to the chronology of the Egyptians and Chaldeans, the most part of that time which was taken up by Themistocles in flying from place to place, to avoid the persecutions of his enemies, is not to be referred to the last year of the reign of Xerxes, but to the first year of the reign of his son Artaxerxes."

SECTION

SECTION V.

Additional Arguments in Support of the Opinion that Xerxes reigned only eleven Years, and not twenty-one.

TO what Mr. Taylor has advanced in support of his opinion that Xerxes reigned only eleven years, and against Artaxerxes having been associated in the empire with him during the ten last years of his reign, according to Petavius, I would add,

First, that it appears from the history of Persia at the death of Xerxes, who was assassinated by Artabanus, that Artaxerxes was at that time but a *youth*; so that if he had been associated with his father in the empire ten years before his death, he must have been a mere *child*; and yet, according to Thucydides, it was to Artaxerxes, and not to Xerxes, that Themistocles was introduced, at the very beginning of those ten years.

Secondly, Artaxerxes was only the *third* son of Xerxes, so that if any of the sons had been made associate in the empire along with the father, there is no reason to think that the preference would have been given to him, rather than to one of his elder brothers, and especially to Darius, who was the eldest. But, indeed, no antient historian makes the least mention of any of the sons of Xerxes having been associated with him in the empire.

Thirdly, we find nothing said concerning Xerxes, from the time of his return from the Grecian expedition to the time of his death. Or, if his name be mentioned, it is only as the king of Persia,

Persia, by later historians, who took it for granted that he was then upon the throne.

Fourthly, the opinion that Xerxes reigned only eleven years, and not twenty-one; and yet that no addition is to be made to the reign of Artaxerxes on that account, appears to me to be favoured by the computation of the eclipses of the sun which are said to have happened in the course of his reign.

Herodotus says (Lib. 7. Cap. 37) that in the beginning of the spring (*απὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ*) when Xerxes was sailing from Sardis, where he had wintered on his expedition into Greece, *the sun, leaving his place in the heavens, became invisible* (*αφάνης ἐγένετο*) *when there were no clouds, and the sky was perfectly serene; so that from being day it became night.* This event terrified Xerxes very much; but his fears were allayed by his soothsayers, who told him that the sun represented the states of Greece, which were going to be obscured, whereas Persia was denoted by the moon.

The same writer says (Lib. 8. Cap. 7) that as soon as the people of Peloponnesus heard of the death of Leonidas at Thermopylæ, a great force, from all their cities, went in haste, under the command of Cleombrotus, to the Isthmus, which they fortified with a wall, as quickly as possible, working day and night, the Olympia and Carneia being then over*. He also says (Lib. 9. Cap. 6) that when the consultation was held in consequence of the offers made to the Athenians by Mardonius, the Lacedæmonians were celebrating the Hyacinthia, which was in the month Hecatombæon, in the year follow-

* The Olympic games began on the 11th and ended on the 15th day of Hecatombæon, the first month of the Grecian year, which began with the first new moon after the summer solstice; and the Carneia began on the 13th day of the month Carneus, answering to Metagitnion, the second month in the Grecian year, and lasted 9 days. This, therefore, was about the beginning of September.

ing, and that they had nearly completed that wall; for they were then building the turrets (*επάλξεις*).

During that festival the Lacedemonians sent Pausanias, the son of Cleombrotus, with an army out of the Peloponnesus, Cleombrotus having died not long after he had brought away those who were building the wall on the Isthmus; and he had brought them away because when he was sacrificing on account of the Persian war, *the sun was darkened* (*ο ηλιος ημαυρωθη*) which I believe is generally supposed to mean that this luminary was then *eclipsed*. This eclipse, therefore, if it was one, happened sometime between the middle of Metagitnion of one year, and the Hecatombæon of the year following, or between the beginning of September and the end of June. It evidently happened between the battle of Salamis and that of Platea, the former of which Petavius says (*Rationarium Temporis* p. 87) was upon the 20th of Boedromion, answering to the 23d of our September *, and the latter on the third Boedromion, in the year following.

I have carefully examined all the eclipses for all the years that are usually ascribed to the reign of Xerxes, by the help of Mr. Ferguson's tables, the ingenious author himself being so obliging as to give me his assistance in this work; and I find no total eclipse of the sun visible at Sardis in that whole period; so that Herodotus's account of the former of the eclipses above mentioned must be exaggerated. But I do find an eclipse of the sun, of about five digits, visible at Sardis on the 20th of March in the year 470 B.C. in which year he must have left

* Sir Isaac Newton says (*Observations on Daniel* p. 142) that the battle of Salamis was in the autumn on the 16th of Munychion; but in this he must have been mistaken, for then it would have been about the beginning of April. The same thing is repeated by him in his *Chronology* p. 356, where he says the eclipse that followed was of the moon. It ought to have been of the sun.

Sardis upon the supposition of his having reigned only 11 years. The greatest obscuration was at 11 minutes past five in the afternoon. Now this being in the spring of the year, and about the time that so great an armament as that of Xerxes may be supposed to have been in motion, appears to me to make it very probable that the year 470 B.C. was the very year of the expedition.

I do not, indeed, find any eclipse of the sun visible at the Isthmus within the limits marked out for the second of the eclipses mentioned above; but I think it very possible that Herodotus, by the expression above mentioned, might not intend an eclipse. He only says that *the sun was darkened*; and considering how ignorant and superstitious the Lacedemonians were, above all the other people of Greece, it is very possible that Cleombrotus and his army would be sufficiently alarmed, if, when they were sacrificing on so very interesting an occasion, thick clouds should have arisen pretty suddenly, and have obscured the sun. This is the sum of the evidence from eclipses, in favour of the expedition from Sardis having been in the year 470 B.C.

They who give Xerxes a reign of 21 years suppose that this expedition was in 480 B.C.; but there was no eclipse of the sun visible at Sardis that year, though there was an eclipse of about 6 digits visible at the Isthmus on the 2d of October of the same year, which was a little after the time of the battle of Salamis, and therefore sufficiently within the limits above mentioned; and for this reason Sir Isaac Newton has pitched upon the year 480 B.C. for that event; saying that, by calculation, this eclipse fell on the 2d of October. *Observations on Daniel p. 142.*

There was a small eclipse of the sun visible at Sardis on the 20th of April 481 B.C. but this could hardly be said to be
early

early in the spring in that warm climate, it being in the time of harvest; and the hypothesis of this having been the year of that expedition is not helped by the computation of the eclipse at the Isthmus in 480 B.C. because this eclipse would be much too late, being within a very few days of the time of the battle of Platea; whereas that eclipse, if it was an eclipse, was evidently over at the time of the consultation above mentioned, before the Grecian army had left Peloponnesus.

Those who, with Sir Isaac Newton, adopt the chronology of Ptolemy, as confirmed by the eclipses which he represents as observed in certain years of the reign of Cambyfes and Darius, are not at liberty to avail themselves of the eclipse in 481, as fixing the time of Xerxes's expedition. For the whole series of eclipses fixes that expedition to the year 480 B.C. and no other, and will no more admit of its having been in 481 B.C. than in 470 B.C.

The same may be said concerning another eclipse of the sun, visible at Sardis on the 17th of Feb. 478 B.C. which Kepler thought to be the eclipse described by Herodotus, and to have happened when he was at Sardis the second time, *viz.* on his return from Greece; and which in Mr. Costard's opinion fixes the expedition to the year 478; saying that at Smyrna this eclipse was of 11½ digits. But, computing by Mr. Ferguson's tables * (which by comparing a computation of the eclipse of 470 made by these tables, with another made in the most exact manner by Mr. Reuben Burrow, I find to be suffi-

* To those who have occasion to examine antient eclipses, I would recommend the use of Mr. Ferguson's *New Rotula*, by the help of which a person may see, in a very short time, all the eclipses of any year whatever, so as to form a pretty good judgment whether they will answer his purpose or not. And in a very few hours any of them may be computed and projected with sufficient exactness by the tables and precepts in his treatise of Astronomy. I cannot express how much satisfaction I have had in the use of them upon this occasion.

ently exact for these purposes) I find that this eclipse must have been a very inconsiderable one, the moon having at that time too much northern latitude to occasion a considerable eclipse in any place.

Upon the whole I think it very probable, from this evidence, that the expedition of Xerxes was in the year 470 B.C.; when there was a real eclipse of the sun visible at Sardis, which Herodotus describes in terms that cannot possibly admit of any other interpretation, and at the very *time* of the year in which he represents it to have happened, though the *quantity* of the eclipse does not answer to his description of it. Whereas, with respect to the year 480 B.C. it is by no means certain that Herodotus mentions any eclipse visible at the Isthmus, in the passage in which he has been supposed to speak of one, and there was no eclipse in that year at Sardis, where he certainly does describe one.

If my deductions from this eclipse, concurring with Mr. Taylor's historical observations, be just, we must take ten years from the whole period of time preceding the reign of Xerxes; and I do not know of any historical or astronomical reason to the contrary.

Before this eclipse described by Herodotus, I find no mention of any other eclipse, certainly connected with any historical event, besides that which appeared during the battle between the Lydians and Medes, on the banks of the river Halys, in the reign of Cyaxares. But this was so remote from that which was seen in the reign of Xerxes, and the intermediate events are so little known, that neither of them can be of the least use in fixing the other.

Besides these, there are six eclipses of the moon mentioned by Ptolemy, as having been visible at Babylon in certain years
of

of the Nabonassarian æra; viz. 257, 246, 225, 127, 28, and 27. To these dates he has also connected certain years of the Persian and Babylonian kings, making 257, of the Nabonassarian æra correspond to 31 of Darius Hystaspes, 246 to 20 of the same prince, &c. And because it is found by computation, that there were eclipses of the moon visible at Babylon in those years of the Nabonassarian æra, it is taken for granted by Sir Isaac Newton, Prideaux, and I believe all chronologers without exception, that Ptolemy's catalogue of kings is confirmed by eclipses, and therefore cannot be disputed.

But it appears to me that this foundation of Ptolemy's chronology is a very weak one; since there is no proper *historical evidence*, that those eclipses were connected with any events in the corresponding years of those reigns. For any thing that appears to the contrary, Ptolemy has only annexed to the table of eclipses, originally adjusted to a table of the Nabonassarian æra only, the years of the kings, according to his own ideas of their correspondence. This table of eclipses Montucla says (*Histoire des Mathematiques*, vol. 1. p. 60) Ptolemy, no doubt, had from Hipparchus, who collected every thing he could of that kind; and Hipparchus, being merely an astronomer, it is the more probable that he was not solicitous about the adjustment of the years of the kings reigns to those of the eclipses; and therefore that the years of the kings were added by Ptolemy himself. But whenever these years were added, there is no proof of their having been connected from the beginning; and without this, their *proper correspondence* ought not to be admitted.

The opinion of Petavius does not require any deduction from the whole period of years before the reign of Xerxes. For though he adds ten years to the reign of Artaxerxes, he takes
nothing

nothing from the life or the reign of Xerxes, and though Archbishop Usher does take from the reign of Xerxes, yet he adds just so much to that of Artaxerxes.

SECTION VI.

Of the Duration of Christ's Ministry.

IT is remarkable that, in collecting the opinions of christian critics on the subject of this section, the farther we go back into antiquity, the shorter we find the duration of Christ's ministry was thought to be; and the oldest christian fathers were almost universally of opinion, that our Lord preached no longer than one year, or one year and a few months.

Sir Isaac Newton says, in his *Observations on Daniel*, p. 145, that "the christians who first began to inquire into these things, as Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Tertullian, Julius Africanus, Lactantius, Jerom, Austin, Sulpicius Severus, Prosper, and as many as placed the death of Christ in the 15th or 16th of Tiberius, make Christ to have preached but one year, or at most but two; and at length Eusebius discovered four successive passovers in the gospel of John, and "there-

“ thereupon set on foot an opinion that he preached three years
 “ and an half, and so died in the 19th of Tiberius.”

Tatian, who composed the first *Harmony of the Evangelists*, and who wrote about the year 170, took it for granted that our Lord's ministry was comprised within the space of one year, and in this he was followed by Ammonius, and other harmonists.

The opinion of Eusebius is now generally prevalent, though there are some critics who extend the public ministry of Christ a year or two farther.

It is evident, however, that Eusebius had a very different idea of the distribution of the events in the gospel history from our modern harmonists. He says (Hist. Lib. 13. Cap. 24) “ It
 “ is evident that all the acts of our Saviour related by Matthew,
 “ Mark, or Luke, are those that followed the imprisonment of
 “ John, and were comprised within the space of one year; and
 “ that John enlarged the history, by taking in the events that
 “ preceded the imprisonment of the Baptist.” Eusebius, therefore, throws that business into one year, which the generality of Harmonists distribute into two or three.

I own I cannot help expressing my surprise, that so little regard should have been paid to the opinion of those who lived the nearest to the times of Christ, and therefore had, certainly, the best opportunity of being well informed concerning it; and especially that Sir Isaac Newton himself, after reciting what I have quoted from him, should extend the ministry of Christ so as to comprehend in it five passovers. And yet when Mr. Mann, with his modesty and ingenuity, proposed the original hypothesis, of *one year*, he absolutely staggered and offended, as I may say, the whole christian world; and I never heard of so much as one single person having adopted his opinion.

With-

Without, however, being discouraged by this circumstance, I thought that the deliberate sentiments of such a writer as Mr. Mann at least deserved attention; and I must acknowledge, that the more attention I have given to his scheme, the more evidence I see in favour of it, and the more improbable every contrary hypothesis appears to me; and I have at present a satisfaction that I cannot express in reading the gospel history with his ideas of it. Upon this plan, all the events have a much more easy and natural connection than upon any other: they have consequently a greater *propriety*, and an additional *evidence*.

Mr. Mann seems to have been led to his hypothesis by his peculiar interpretation of Daniel's prophecy of 70 weeks, with which he makes it correspond. But though it has been seen that I agree with him in the time that he assigns for the birth of Christ, I think him mistaken with respect to the time of his death, which he places in the year 26, or the 15th of Tiberius, reckoned from the time of his becoming associate in the empire with Augustus. And I rather wonder that this excellent critic should allow so much to the evidence of the christian fathers in one of these cases, and so little in the other; especially as the two opinions of Christ having preached but one year, and of his having been crucified when the Gemini were consuls, went together, and therefore rest upon the same authority.

I shall now proceed to recite, in brief, the evidence that Mr. Mann has produced in favour of his scheme, besides what arises from its agreement with the dates that he assigns to the birth and death of Christ, and his interpretation of the prophecy of Daniel above mentioned.

In

HARMONY OF THE EVANGELISTS. 41

In addition to those Fathers who held the same opinion with himself, quoted by Sir Isaac Newton, he adds the testimony of Justin Martyr, and Valentinus the heretic.

Luke, he observes, mentions only two epochs in his history of Christ, that of his birth, and that of his baptism; and therefore was with reason understood by the Fathers to comprehend in the second epoch his death with his baptism, both happening within the compass of the same year, or but a few months more. To this, says he, may be added the probability that this evangelist mentions both Annas and Caiaphas as high priests, because Annas was in that office in that year in which was most of the preaching and miracles of Christ, and Caiaphas in the other, in the first quarter of which our Lord suffered.

The passage in Isaiah lxi. 1, 2, which our Lord read in the synagogue at Nazareth, and which he notified to be then fulfilled, viz. *The spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to preach the acceptable year of the Lord*, was antiently, he says, thought to signify that Christ was to preach but one year, distinguished by that appellation.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke evidently supposed the preaching of only one year; and even John's gospel, which alone has been thought to suppose more, will not, in fact, be found to do so. For he mentions only one summer and one winter. He describes the events of only two passovers, one pentecost, one feast of tabernacles, and one feast of dedication; and he mentions them in their natural order, if we suppose that the 6th chapter of this evangelist hath been transposed out of its proper place, and that it should precede the 5th. But the marks of the transposition he thinks to be evident.

1. The last words of chap. v. are mentioned as spoken by Jesus in Jerusalem, and the words immediately following them, in chap. vi. without any introduction or preparation whatever, represent him passing out of Galilee to the eastern side of the sea of Tiberias; but this is an easy sequel of the 4th chapter, which left him in Galilee. Again, the end of the 5th chapter has the same easy connection with the beginning of the 7th, that the end of the 4th has with the beginning of the 6th. For in chap. v. 16 and 18, Jesus, in Jerusalem, is reasoning with the Jews, who were seeking to kill him; and the 7th chapter opens with an account of his going into Galilee, because the Jews sought to kill him. But as the chapters stand at present, the 6th represents him teaching at Capernaum, in Galilee; and yet the 7th begins with these words, *After these things Jesus walked in Galilee*, as if he had been just arrived there from some other territory.

2. The passovers, as the chapters are now ranged, are multiplied beyond all probability: for chap. iv. 45; Jesus appears to be just returned from the first passover, and cures the nobleman's son at Capernaum; and at the end of nine verses more, v. 1. he is gone back to the second passover (as some reckon it) and nothing more is said of him during the remainder of that first year. From this imaginary passover v. 1. when Jesus healed the cripple at the pool of Bethesda, to the feast of tabernacles, vii. 2. that is, according to the modern account, during all the second year, the third passover, and half the third year, he is only said to have worked one miracle, and the next day to have taught in Capernaum; and nothing more is said of him for all the rest of the supposed eighteen months. Now doth it seem at all probable, that any person, professing to write the history of Christ's public ministry, during the space of about three years, should omit near two years and a half of that time?

3. It

3. It appears that Jesus retired to the desert of Bethsaida upon the death of John the baptist, and there fed the five thousand. This is mentioned John vi. 5 ; and yet, in v. 35, Jesus at Jerusalem, speaks of him as of one who had been dead some time before. *He was a burning and a shining light.* But to this argument of Mr. Mann it may be replied, that it might refer to John's being in prison, as well as to his being dead.

It may be objected to the whole of Mr. Mann's hypothesis, that in John vi. 4. we read, *and the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.* But it cannot, he says, be supposed that John wrote so ; because he had mentioned the passover in chap. ii. and even related several of the events of it ; and therefore could not suppose that his readers would want an explanation of the term in that place. Gerard Vossius, therefore, and other critics, would read, *and a feast of the Jews was nigh*, and imagine that the word *passover* was first added, as a conjectural explanation of some person or other. However the antient Fathers could never have imagined, as they did, that Christ preached only one year, if this third passover had been so expressly mentioned in their copies of this gospel. Besides, there is no mention of Christ's assisting at any third passover.

SECTION VII.

*Remarks on some of the Arguments of Mr. Mann, with
Observations in Confirmation of them.*

THUS I have given an epitome of the arguments that Mr. Mann has advanced in favour of his hypothesis, to which I would add the following *remarks*, previous to some distinct *additional arguments* in favour of it.

1. It has been observed, since Mr. Mann's publication, that Clemens Alexandrinus, and the rest of the Fathers who embraced the same opinion, were led to it by their peculiar interpretation of the above mentioned passage in Isaiah. On the contrary, it appears to me that the interpretation is so very singular and unnatural, that it could never have suggested the opinion; but that the opinion, once previously fixed, *viz.* that Christ preached only one year, might very easily have led such interpreters of the scriptures as the Fathers were to that explanation of the text; and that nothing but a corresponding opinion, generally received, could have made such an interpretation supportable. It could never have stood its ground against a contrary opinion.

2. Mr. Mann thinks that the Fathers supposed St. Luke, in the date that he fixes to the baptism of Christ, *viz.* the 15th of Tiberius, meant to include that of his death also; and that, in reality, it is to the latter event, as being the more important of the two, that those dates correspond. I own I see no foundation for this construction, either with respect to the thing itself, or the opinion of the Fathers concerning it. On the contrary,
it

it is certainly most natural to suppose that if Christ was baptised in the 15th of Tiberius, and preached one intire year after that, he must have died in the 16th of that emperor, which is the year in which the Gemini were consuls. But notwithstanding this mistake of Mr. Mann, I think the conduct of Luke upon this occasion affords almost a demonstration that the year of Christ's death immediately followed that of his baptism.

Luke has given us the date of John the Baptist's beginning to preach with a most remarkable precision. "Now in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness," &c. There is, perhaps, no example of any other event so circumstantially and emphatically dated, in the whole compass of history. Now can it be supposed that the same writer would leave an event of infinitely more consequence, viz. that of the *death of Christ*, with which his history terminates, without any date at all. But this is the case if he has left no trace by which the one may be certainly inferred from the other; in consequence of having confounded the events of several years, in such a manner that no person can pretend to distinguish or number them. Whereas, the conduct of this writer is perfectly reconcileable with itself, upon the supposition that, in his idea, the year of the death of Christ immediately followed that of the preaching of John, no other year intervening between them. For then the date of the one would be abundantly sufficient for the date of the other; and it was certainly more natural to give the date at the beginning than at the end of the work.

Now

Now it is universally acknowledged that, had no other gospel than that of Luke been extant, it must have been taken for granted, that the whole history, from the commencement of the preaching of John to the death of Christ, was comprehended within the space of less than two years, no mention of passovers, or any other marks of time, indicating the contrary.

3. If ever any weight ought to be allowed to a *negative argument*, I think we may safely conclude, from what Ireneus says on the duration of Christ's ministry, Lib. 2. Cap. 39, that he had not seen any copy of the gospel of John that contained the word *πᾶσχα* in the 4th verse of the 6th chapter. For though it is evident he was most eagerly bent upon collecting all the evidence he possibly could against the opinion of the Valentinians, *viz.* that Christ preached only one year; and he particularly remarks all the passages in the gospel of John where he imagined a passover was intended, though not expressed; he makes no mention of this in the 6th chapter, but dwells upon that feast of which mention is made in the 5th chapter, on which Jesus cured the infirm man at the pool of Bethesda.

His commentator Mr. Grabe acknowledges that his author must have been mistaken in his inference; but says that, in the chapter following (which Ireneus had quoted in some other place) there was express mention made of another passover. Had Ireneus ever seen that passage, as we now read it, he would, I doubt not, have preferred it (as infinitely better adapted to his purpose) to the feast mentioned in the 5th chapter, concerning which not the least hint can be collected that it was a passover. It is remarkable, however, that, even with the help of this groundless assumption, Ireneus is not able to extend the ministry of Christ beyond the space of two years, by any evidence from the gospel history.

But

But to shew how little credit is to be given to this writer upon this subject, and how far his zeal against what he deemed to be heresy was capable of carrying him, he, in the same chapter, extends the life of Christ to a period beyond fifty years; partly on the supposition of the necessity of his being an example to persons of every age, and partly on the evidence, as he says, of all the ancients who had conversed with the apostle John in Asia, and of others who had the same account from other apostles.

But it does not appear that Ireneus made many converts to his opinion. It is mentioned, indeed, by Austin, but only as the opinion of persons unskilled in history; and we find the most learned Fathers who immediately followed Ireneus, as Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, Origen, &c. had embraced the reprobated opinion of Valentinus, without the least mention of any contrary opinion deserving the least notice.

Lastly, it will be found, upon examination, that Eusebius could not have had a copy of the gospel of John which had the word *πρωτη* in the sixth chapter, and have supposed, as he did, that all the events mentioned by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, were comprized within the space of one year.

SECTION

SECTION VIII.

*Additional Arguments in Support of the Hypothesis that
Christ preached only one year and a few months.*

TO these remarks relating to some of the arguments alledged by Mr. Mann I would suggest the following distinct additional arguments in favour of the period which he has assigned to the public ministry of Christ.

1. Some very short periods of our Lord's public ministry appear, according to the accounts of all the evangelists, to have been very full of business. He seems to have been almost incessantly employed in teaching, in healing great numbers of diseased persons, and performing other miraculous works; and from the manner in which the evangelists describe his usual way of life, it should seem that the greatest part of his time was thus fully employed. He continually went about doing good, making it *his meat and his drink to do the will of his heavenly father*.

If, now, our Lord had passed three or four years in this manner, and the twelve apostles had also been teaching and working miracles in six different places for the space of a year or more, in that small country, and the seventy also in thirty five places more, for the same space of time, as is generally supposed; such a number of miracles would have been performed, as we cannot but think, must have exceeded every proper purpose of them. Either there could have been no unbelievers left in Judea: or, if the tendency of the miracles had been to exasperate, such a resentment would have been raised in the minds of

of the Jewish rulers, as, without a greater miracle than any of the rest, could not but have terminated in his death long before. For my own part, instead of thinking a single year not to have been sufficient for the purpose of our Lord's mission, I rather wonder, considering in what manner he spent his time, that the incredulity of the people could hold out, or that the malice of his enemies could be restrained so long as one year.

Considering the violent prejudices, that such a people as the Jews must have had against the pretensions of a Messiah, who made the appearance that Jesus did, one may indeed imagine, that the bulk, or the more depraved and worldly-minded of them might withstand the evidence of miracles performed in one year; but hardly any degree of incredulity can be supposed to have stood out against the thousands, and ten thousands of miracles, that must have been wrought upon the common hypothesis.

2. It is also more easy to account for the prejudices of the apostles, and their ignorance of the true nature of Christ's kingdom, even at, and after our Lord's death, on the supposition that his ministry was of a short, than that it was of a long duration.

3. If our Lord really preached three or four years; and, consequently, if the evangelists have sometimes passed over all the events of whole years at a time, is it not surprising, that none of them should ever connect those very distant parts of their narrative by such phrases as *the year following*; *after one*, or *after two years*; &c. &c. The *seasons of the year* are sometimes particularly distinguished, and we find the exact number of *days* that intervened between two events carefully noted; but nothing that implies such chasms as are commonly supposed

to be in the evangelical history. Their usual transition, *after these things, or afterwards*, cannot be construed to mean *after a year or two*.

4. If Jesus had been preaching and working miracles, both in Judea and in Galilee, almost a year before the death of John the Baptist, agreeable to the common hypothesis, Herod, who reigned in Galilee, could not but have heard of him; and therefore could not but have known that he was not John that was risen from the dead, as in Matt. xiv. 1. Whereas, if we suppose that Jesus had preached only a few weeks before the death of John, we may imagine, that, engaged as Herod was in a multiplicity of business and pleasure, he might not have heard of him till that time; and therefore might, with some plausibility, conjecture, as he did, that he was John risen from the dead. This argument appears to me to be almost conclusive against the common hypothesis.

5. All our Lord's journeys that the evangelists give us any account of, agree in so many circumstances, that they are evidently the same, and are supposed to be so by all harmonists. Now since these four historians have selected very different events in our Saviour's life, is it not surprising, that all his journeys to Jerusalem make no more than four; three of which, at least, every pious Jew was obliged to make in the compass of every year? Our Lord must have made that journey three or four times as often, in three or four years, and it may well be supposed that something remarkable must have happened in several of them, besides those four. John, who supplies many of the deficiencies of the other evangelists, only makes up the number of them to four. He supplies many new discourses, and new incidents, but no more journeys to Jerusalem than those above mentioned.

HARMONY OF THE EVANGELISTS. 5

If we read the history of the evangelists with attention, we shall find several small periods of time, as was observed before. exceedingly crowded with business, particularly a week or two after his appearance in Galilee, after the first passover, and a week before his death. If only a month or two of the year were spent in this manner, all the business that is recorded in all the evangelists might have been transacted in it; so that, even upon this hypothesis, we must suppose great omissions in our Lord's history, according to the testimony of John.

SECTION IX.

Objections to the preceding Hypothesis considered.

IT may be objected to the hypothesis I am maintaining, that though it is *possible* that all the events that are expressly mentioned in the history of our Lord, might have been comprehended within the compass of one year, yet that several *circumstances*, and *expressions* also lead us to suppose, that more is suppressed, than could be brought within that space of time; particularly our Lord's tarrying and making disciples in Judea before he went to Galilee, after the first passover, John iii. 22; his dwelling at Capernaum, Matt. iv. 13; and his going about all Galilee teaching in their synagogues, v. 23, on the sabbath days, Luke iv. 31. It is also said, that the missions of the Twelve and of the Seventy, must have taken up more time than can be allowed for them on this hypothesis. I shall therefore consider all these cases a little particularly; and the illustration I shall give of them may perhaps assist us to understand the force of similar expressions, when they occur elsewhere.

I. Though John speaks of our Lord's *tarrying* in Judea, after the first passover, and before his going into Galilee, iii. 22. and making more disciples there than John did at the same time, yet several circumstances make it evident, that his stay in Judea at that time could not have been long. For not only do the other evangelists make no mention of this stay in Judea; but the manner in which they all relate the history of the first transactions in Galilee, shews that they had no idea of any thing considerable having been done before.

Matthew

Matthew says, iv. 7, that it was after his coming to Capernaum that *Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

Mark, i. 11, represents the great fame of Jesus in Galilee to have arisen from the miracle which he performed in the synagogue at Capernaum, on the day that he healed Peter's wife's mother.

Luke closely connects his account of the temptation with that of his preaching in Galilee, saying, iv. 14. *And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and there went a fame of him through all the region round about.*

From the history of the transactions at the first passover, it is evident, that the Pharisees were, at that time, very attentive to our Lord's conduct; so that his making disciples in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem cannot be supposed to have escaped their notice many days: from which we may conclude, that whatever effect our Lord's apprehensions from the Jews could have had, must have been produced very soon, probably in less than a week. Having been baptised in that country, having been distinguished by a voice from heaven, and having been so particularly pointed out by John there, he could not be long in making disciples enow to alarm the Jews. Besides, it is probable that most of the disciples that Jesus made, (at which the Jews took umbrage) were made before the passover; so that a few days afterwards, in which he was sure to be carefully watched, would be sufficient to alarm his enemies, and to induce him to withdraw himself from their envy and malice.

Lastly, Peter and Andrew, James and John, the first of our Lord's disciples, did not particularly attend upon him till after
his

his arrival in Galilee; which I think is a presumption, that he had not spent much time in preaching elsewhere; a great part of our Lord's business being to instruct his apostles, and train them up to their future services in the church.

II. Matthew, indeed, mentions Jesus's *dwelling* at Capernaum; but he could not mean that he resided there for any long time together; since our Lord himself sufficiently intimated, that he had no fixed habitation during his public ministry, when he said, Matt. viii. 20. *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head.* It is possible that the meaning of Matthew might be, that our Lord's family, *i. e.* his mother and brethren, removed to Capernaum about that time, as they are expressly said to have done by John (ii. 12.) a little before the passover, though they did not make a long stay at that time, but went up to the feast. We also afterwards find Jesus's mother and brethren at Capernaum, and in the neighbourhood, when his brethren are expressly said not to have been his disciples.

Or, perhaps, our Lord's dwelling at Capernaum may only mean that it was the place where he most frequently was during his stay in Galilee. And we do, indeed, find that this town was, as it were, the center of our Lord's business, and the *terminus* of all his journeys.

But notwithstanding this, we may infer that Capernaum did by no means particularly engage the attention of Jesus, from his joining Chorazin and Bethsaida with it, in the woe which he pronounced upon those places in which his mighty works had been chiefly done, for not improving the opportunities his presence had afforded them.

III. As

III. As to our Lord's *preaching in all the synagogues of Galilee*, mentioned Matt. xiv. 13, the time that he was absent from Capernaum, on that very progress, does not admit of its being understood literally. For Mark, describing the very same progress, in language similar to that of Matthew; saying, i. 33, that *he left Capernaum to go to the next towns to preach there also, and that he preached in their synagogues through all Galilee, and cast out devils*; yet says, ii. 1. that *he entered again into Capernaum, after some days only*.

Besides, these general expressions concerning Christ's preaching in all the towns of Galilee, though introduced in this particular place, may refer to all the time that he passed in that country, in which it is probable that few of the places escaped him or his disciples; and that he omitted no opportunity of preaching in the synagogues wherever he could conveniently go.

Luke, indeed, says, iv. 31, that *when Jesus came down to Capernaum, he taught them on the sabbath days*, τοῖς σαββάτοις; from which some infer, that he spent several sabbaths there at that time; and Dr. Doddridge, in enumerating the objections to Mr. Mann's hypothesis, seems to lay stress on this circumstance. But there are several instances, in the New Testament, in which the plural of σαββάτων is used for the singular, as in Matt. xxviii. 1, οὗτε δε σαββάτων, which we render *in the end of the sabbath*. Indeed it could not have been rendered otherwise; for it means that one particular sabbath on which our Lord lay in the grave. Mark ii. 23. *And it came to pass that he went through the corn-fields on the sabbath day*; ἐν τοῖς σαββάτοις. Also this evangelist Luke, xiii. 10. *And he was teaching in the synagogue on the sabbath* ἐν τοῖς σαββάτοις.

But

But the most decisive argument is derived from the parallel part of the history, as related by Mark, i. 21, who makes use of the same expression with Luke, in relating the same events of the same day. *And they went into Capernaum, and straightway on the sabbath day (τοῖς σαββάτοις) he entered into the synagogue.* Then follows the history of the cure of the demoniac, and of Peter's wife's mother, &c. exactly as in Luke. It is evident therefore, that Luke meant only *one day*, though he uses the plural number, and the very same day that Mark doth, whose expression (though the same with that of Luke) we translate in the singular number.

IV. The mission of the Twelve is generally supposed to have taken up a considerable time; but from the circumstances in which it is related by all the evangelists, it doth not appear that the apostles could have been absent more than about a week, on that occasion.

According to Matthew, all that intervened between the mission of the Twelve, and their return (intimated by the transactions in which we find the disciples with our Lord) is the discourse concerning John; and all that intervened between them, according to Mark and Luke, is the very same discourse, and the alarm of Herod on hearing of the miracles of Jesus; though they place both the mission of the Twelve, and the discourse concerning John, in different parts of the general history.

If it be said that the charge which our Lord gave them, Matt. x. is too particular, and too solemn, for so short an excursion; I answer, that upon any supposition, the charge he gave them on that occasion will be found to respect several circumstances, that could not happen in that particular mission, but must refer to their general mission afterwards; especially
what

what he says concerning their behaviour when carried before magistrates and kings, and concerning persecution unto death.

Besides, though the Twelve might return pretty soon after their first excursion, occasioned by their being alarmed on hearing of the death of John the Baptist, we need not suppose that the mission expired at that time. It might be resumed occasionally afterwards, and especially in the latter part of our Lord's preaching in Galilee.

V. Luke is the only evangelist who mentions the mission of the Seventy; and he says, x. 1. it was during our Lord's journey to Jerusalem, when he took his final leave of Galilee, and that *they were sent into every place where he himself should come*; and he speaks of their return in the seventeenth verse of the same chapter, before he mentions his arrival at Jerusalem. It is evident, from the circumstances of the history, that our Lord made this journey more privately than any others, and arrived at Jerusalem in the middle of the feast, which was that of Tabernacles. Perhaps, therefore, he dismissed his train, partly with a view to travel with less appearance of ostentation; and they might only go to those places through which he himself intended to pass, in his road to Jerusalem at that time. Though, it is possible, however, he might mean the places where he should come afterwards, in the stay he, from that time, made in Judea; but still, being so many of them, and going *two and two*, they would soon have visited every place in that small country. And if they followed the example of our Lord, in his excursions from Capernaum, they stayed a very short time in any place, probably seldom more than one day. This mission also might be resumed occasionally as well as that of the Twelve for Galilee.

But all these particulars will perhaps be seen in a stronger point of light, when I shall give a succinct view of all our Lord's history, in the order of time; and collect all the notes of time, and other marks of transition, that are preserved in any of the evangelists. This is such a view as, I flatter myself, will show not only the possibility, but also the probability of this scheme of a harmony, in a manner independent of all other arguments in its favour.

VI. When our Lord was discoursing with his disciples at the well, in his journey to Galilee, he says, John iv. 35, *Say ye not, There are four months and then cometh harvest.* This, according to some critics (and among them Sir Isaac Newton) implies that, at the time of this journey, it wanted four months to the harvest; and consequently must have been some time in December, which by no means suits Mr. Mann's hypothesis. But I would observe, that this time of the year doth not at all agree with what is generally, and with great probability, supposed, that the heat of the weather, concurred with the fatigue of travelling to increase the thirst our Lord complained of; but that it agrees remarkably well with the supposition of this journey having been made about a week after the passover, or about the middle of April; especially as it is said, John iv. 6. to have been the sixth hour of the day, or noon. Wherefore Grotius, Whitby, and many other commentators, suppose that our Lord quoted a known proverbial expression, which implied, that four months generally intervened between seed time and harvest. And whether there was such a proverbial expression current among the Jews or not, I cannot help thinking there was a peculiar propriety in the observation at that time. Our Lord, in his conversation with the woman, had, as it were, been sowing the seed of the word; and he foresaw the immediate effect of it. He therefore says, four months commonly intervene between seed time and harvest, but I have only just

now

now sown, and, lifting up your eyes, you will see, by the multitudes crouding to us, that the fields are already white for my harvest.

VII. Another objection arises from the *much grafs* that is said to have been in the place where our Lord fed the five thousand; and which, it is thought, doth not well agree with the time of the year in which Mr. Mann places this event. But Mr. Mann places it before Pentecost, and it might be about the latter end of April, or the beginning of May that year; and though the greatest part of the grafs in Judea be burnt up in the month of May, it is not very improbable, that, in some favourable situation, some might remain, and even be *green* in the *beginning* of the month, supposing it to have been so late. As it is not the custom to mow the grafs for hay in that part of the world, if there had been any grafs in the place, it would probably have remained there all the summer, it being a desert place; and Mark, who was not present, is the only evangelist who mentions its being green.

VIII. It would rather embarrass Mr. Mann's hypothesis, to suppose that the Cana in which our Lord made the water wine, and to which he went from Samaria before his arrival at Capernaum, was the Cana near Sydon; because there would hardly be sufficient time for our Lord's journey on foot, and the stay that he made at Sychar, and probably in other places, before his arrival at Capernaum, time enough to admit of the events which intervened between that date and the feast of Pentecost.

But there is no reason to suppose that that was the Cana, but another, much nearer to Capernaum, viz. that Cana which is mentioned by Josephus, as being so near to Tiberias, that, setting out from Cana in the evening, and travelling all night,

with two hundred armed men, he arrived at Tiberias early the next morning. Nor, indeed, do I see why the Cana mentioned in the gospel should be called *Cana in Galilee*, but to distinguish it from some other place of the same name, in another district, probably from the Cana near Sydon, which was properly in Phœnicia, as that term appears to have been used in the time of our Saviour and the Apostles.

Thus Tyre, which was south of Sydon, and Cana is called a city of *Phœnicia*, Acts xxi. 2, 3, and a woman living in that neighbourhood, whose daughter was cured by our Saviour, is called a *Syro-Phœnician*, Mark vii. 26, and a *Canaanite* Matt. xv. 22, perhaps from being an inhabitant of this very Cana, and not a *Galilean*. Besides, Josephus distinguishes this Cana from the other by calling it a city of *Cœle-Syria*, Ant. Lib. 16. Cap. 6; and he represents Galilee as bounded by Phœnicia, including Ptolemais, Tyre, &c. so that though it went up within land as far north as Sydon, it is not probable that it included that Cana. Besides the empress Helena built a church at Cana in Galilee, and not in the Cana near Sydon, in memory of its being the place which had been distinguished by our Saviour's presence and miracles; and it cannot be supposed that, in that age, the scene of those transactions should have been forgotten.

Of two Cana's in Galilee, both of which agree sufficiently well with what Josephus says concerning the place of that name, one is mentioned by Reland (*Palestina*, p. 680) as being situated between Sepphoris and Nazareth, six Roman miles from the latter, towards the west; and the other four miles north of Nazareth, towards the east. Reland says it is disputed which of these is the Cana mentioned in the scriptures; but I think it very possible that these places may, in reality, be the same, their situation not having been accurately described.

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That it must have been Cana near Nazareth that is spoken of by John, and not Cana near Sydon, seems to be evident from the most natural interpretation of what this evangelist says preceding his account of our Lord's arrival at that place, John ii. 1. Speaking of what passed at Bethabara beyond Jordan, John i. 28, he says "the next day John saw Jesus coming unto him, and said, behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." We read afterwards, v. 35 "Again the next day, John stood with two of his disciples:" and v. 43, "the day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee;" and on the evening of this day Philip introduced Nathaniel to Jesus. We then read, chap. ii. v. 1, "and the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee," which Jesus attended. Now it is most natural to suppose that *the third day* is to be counted from the date before mentioned, *viz.* the day on which he set out from beyond Jordan to go into Galilee; and this would not allow him time enough to go from Bethabara to Sydon, especially travelling on foot, as he probably did. Whereas, supposing it to be the Cana near Nazareth, he might very well go to it in less than two days, and there will be time enough for him to have stopped at Nazareth, and there to have received the invitation to Cana.

It is objected that when our Lord was at Cana afterwards, John iv. 46; the nobleman of Capernaum, whose son was cured by Jesus, at the seventh hour of the day, did not meet his servant, who left Capernaum at the same time, till *the next day*; which, supposing that they both set out immediately after the cure, requires that they must have, each of them, travelled at least five hours, and probably from the nature of the occasion, very quick. But even this does not necessarily make the distance to exceed thirty miles, *viz.* five miles an hour without interruption. Besides it is by no means necessary to suppose that both the

master

master and servant set out precisely at the seventh hour of the day, and that nothing happened to retard either of them.

IX. There are three other circumstances of which different harmonists have availed themselves, as favouring their respective hypotheses, and which do not suit with that of Mr. Mann. But it appears to me that they supply no certain notes of time whatever, and therefore may very safely be neglected.

Sir Isaac Newton in his *Observations on Daniel*, p. 154, supposes that when our Lord delivered the *parable of the sower*, it was then *seed time*. According to Mr. Mann's hypothesis it was harvest. But the connection between these two seasons is so great, that the one may very easily be supposed to have led his thoughts to the other. Besides the parable does, in fact, relate to the harvest as well as to the seed time.

The *tribute* which was demanded of our Lord, and which he paid in conjunction with Peter; and also the reading of the prophet Isaiah, a portion of which our Lord expounded at Nazareth, are thought to indicate certain seasons of the year. But it has neither been determined with certainty by the critics what the tribute was, nor the time of the year in which it was paid. Much less are we able to tell, at this distance of time, in what order the Jews read their sacred books in their synagogues, or whether they had one invariable custom in them all.

SECTION

SECTION X.

The Order of the principal Events in the Gospel History.

HAVING, in the preceding sections, exhibited the arguments in favour of a harmony of the gospels, upon the hypothesis that the public ministry of Jesus lasted only a year and a few months; I shall now proceed to adjust the order of the particular transactions in the gospel history, and to give my reasons at large, for my arrangement of the principal facts. But these, I imagine, will be much more intelligible, if, in the first place, I just recite the facts in the order in which I imagine them to have happened.

The reader will please to observe, that the subject of this and the following sections has little or no dependence on the general hypothesis I have endeavoured to support in the preceding ones; since the *order* in which any number of events may be supposed to have taken place, may be considered without any regard to the *time* that elapsed in the succession. In this case it is but substituting the word *passover* for *pentecost*, or the name of some other Jewish feast, and these sections will suit any other hypothesis concerning the duration of Christ's ministry.

As most harmonists, I believe, are nearly agreed in the order of all the events preceding the baptism of Jesus; at least, as nothing new has occurred to me with respect to them, I shall begin my narration at that period; and in order to be as concise as possible, shall mention only such facts as may be sufficient to give a person who is tolerably acquainted with the

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New Testament, an idea of the order in which I should dispose the rest.

After his baptism and temptation, Jesus went into Galilee, and, at Cana, turned the water into wine. He then went to Capernaum, along with his mother, and the rest of the family; and going from thence to Jerusalem, at the first passover, held a conversation with Nicodemus. After this he made a short stay in Judea; but the Pharisees taking umbrage at his making disciples there, he returned into Galilee; and passing through Samaria, conversed with the woman at the well.

Being arrived at Cana, he was met by a nobleman from Capernaum, who intreated him to heal his son; and going from thence to that city he called Peter and Andrew, James and John; and on the sabbath following he cured a demoniac in the synagogue, and Peter's wife's mother in her own house, with many others. These miracles brought such a concourse of people about him, that the next morning, before it was day, he withdrew into a solitary place, whither his disciples resorted to him; and, not chusing to return immediately to Capernaum, he made a circuit through the neighbouring towns and villages.

Great multitudes crouding to him from all quarters, he addressed to them his excellent sermon on the mount. Presently after he cured a leper, and not long after that, entering again into Capernaum, he healed the nobleman's servant. The day following he was at Nain, where he raised the widow's son; and from whence, to avoid another concourse of people, he crossed the sea, stilling a tempest in his passage; and landing in the territory of Gadara, he cured the demoniacs, when the swine were drowned.

Not

Not making any stay in that country, he returned to Capernaum, and healed a paralytic person, who was let down through the roof of the house. After this he walked out by the sea side, and having called Matthew, he dined with him, and held a conversation with the disciples of John. While he was discoursing with them, Jairus applies to him to cure his daughter, who lay at the point of death. In his way he cured the woman who had the issue of blood, and after he returned from Jairus's house he gave sight to two blind men, and cured a dumb demoniac.

Jesus having made himself obnoxious to the Pharisees, by vindicating his disciples for plucking ears of corn on a sabbath day, and healing in the synagogue a man who had a withered hand, withdrew into a desert place, and, on a mountain, set apart the twelve apostles.

The multitudes crowding to him again, he healed their sick, and, among others, a blind and dumb demoniac; and when the Pharisees ascribed this cure to a correspondence with Beelzebub, he discoursed concerning the sin against the Holy Ghost; and when they asked of him a sign from heaven, he gave them the sign of the prophet Jonas; and among other awful denunciations, he related to them the parable of the unclean spirit. While he was talking, and probably with a good deal of earnestness on this occasion, his mother and brethren desired to speak with him, which gave him an opportunity of expressing his superior regard to his disciples.

On the same day on which he held this discourse, he went to the sea side, and, for the greater convenience of speaking, stood in a ship, while he delivered several parables to the people standing on the shore; and, among others, that of the sower,

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which

which he afterwards explained to his disciples, reciting to them several others.

Leaving the neighbourhood of Capernaum, he went to Nazareth; and being rejected, and having had his life attempted by his countrymen of that place, he went into the neighbouring villages; and seeing great multitudes, as sheep without a shepherd, he had compassion on them, and commissioned the twelve apostles to preach to them, and heal their sick.

In the absence of the Twelve, the disciples of John apply to him, bringing a message from their master; and when they had left him, he discoursed with the multitude concerning John, and at the same time pronounced a woe upon the places in which most of his mighty works had been performed.

About this time Jesus dined with Simon the Pharisee, to whom, when he was disgusted with the affectionate behaviour of a woman who had been a sinner, he related the parable of the creditor and two debtors.

Jesus, hearing of the death of John the Baptist, retired by ship into a desert place, together with the apostles who had resorted to him, and here he fed a great multitude with five loaves and two fishes. Having sent his disciples away by ship, while he stayed to dismiss the company, he came to them in the night, walking on the sea. They landed in the territory of Gennesaret; and the multitude, influenced by worldly motives, afterwards following him to Capernaum, he discoursed with them in so mysterious a manner concerning bread, that the greatest part of those who had followed him hitherto, deserted him now.

At the feast of Pentecost Jesus cured a cripple at the pool of Bethesda, and discoursed with the Jews concerning his mission;
but

but they seeking to kill him, he retreated again to Galilee, where he held a conversation with some Pharisees, who had followed him from Jerusalem, concerning traditions.

After this he went into the coasts of Tyre and Sydon, where he healed the daughter of a Syrophœnician woman; and being returned to Galilee, he cured a demoniac who was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech. Being in a desert place, he again fed a great multitude by a miracle. At Magdala he discoursed with the Pharisees concerning the signs of the times, and at Bethsaida he cured a blind man.

After this he made an excursion to the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, and there began to foretel his sufferings, and future glory. His transfiguration happened six days after. Descending from the mount of transfiguration he cured a demoniacal child; and after several discourses with his disciples, and other incidents at Capernaum, he took his final leave of Galilee. Travelling through Samaria, he was not received by the people of that country. Here, however, he cured the ten lepers.

On this journey he sent out the Seventy; and being arrived at Jerusalem, at the feast of Tabernacles, he discoursed with the Jews concerning his mission, reproved the woman who was taken in adultery, and cured a man who had been blind from his birth.

In the interval between the feast of Tabernacles and the feast of Dedication, I place all those incidents and discourses which are related by Luke after his mention of Jesus's having taken his final leave of Galilee, and before those events that are closely connected with the history of his death, and for which I can find no other place, by means of a corresponding story

in some other evangelist. Here, therefore, I introduce the discourse concerning the Galileans killed by Pilate, the parable of the good Samaritan, of the wedding supper, of the prodigal son, of the rich man and Lazarus, and of the Pharisee and Publican, with some others.

At the feast of Dedication Jesus, in the temple, publicly declared himself to be the Messiah, and the Jews thereupon seeking to kill him, he retired to the country beyond Jordan, where he held the discourse concerning divorces, and the danger of riches; and where he blessed the children that were brought to him, &c.

From this country he made a journey into Judea, to raise from the dead his friend Lazarus; but having by this miracle, performed in the presence of many of his enemies, greatly enraged the Pharisees and rulers of the Jews, he retired to Ephraim, in the wilderness of Judea.

Journeying from these parts to Jerusalem, before the second passover, he again foretold his sufferings; and passing through Jericho, in the neighbourhood of that town, he cured a blind man, and visited Zaccheus.

Coming in view of Jerusalem, he lamented over it; and being arrived at Bethany, he supped with Simon the leper, where Lazarus was present, and his sister Mary anointed him; which gave such offence to Judas Iscariot, that from that time he formed a resolution to betray him to his enemies, who were now, more than ever, intent upon putting him to death.

The next day he entered the city in triumph, and purged the temple. The morning following, on his return from Bethany (where he now lodged every night) he cursed the barren

barren fig-tree (the effects of which were seen the next day) and held many discourses in the temple.

In this manner he passed his time till the day before he suffered; on the evening of which he eat the passover with his disciples; and Judas, whose treachery he had detected, having left them, he instituted the Lord's supper; and then discoursed with the eleven in a most affectionate manner, and foretold Peter's denial of him.

Leaving the house in which they had supped, and perhaps coming in view of the mount of Olives, he discoursed concerning the true vine, gave his disciples the promise of the Comforter in his absence from them; and in a solemn prayer, recommended them to the care and blessing of God his father.

Being arrived at Gethsemane, he was seized with an agony in a garden; and Judas arriving with a company of armed men, and some of the Jewish rulers, he was conducted first to Annas, then to Caiaphas, and afterwards to Pilate; who, after sending him to Herod, sentenced him to be crucified.

The order of the subsequent transactions it is not to my purpose at present to consider.

Such is the order in which I would chuse to dispose the leading events in the life of Christ, which the reader will perceive to be considerably different from that of Mr. Mann, and I believe also from that of all other harmonists. In the next section I shall proceed to exhibit the reasons of this arrangement, or the evidence of the harmony.

SECTION

SECTION XI.

General preliminary Remarks, relating to the Order of the Events in the Gospel History.

OF the many original histories of the life of Christ, which were probably once extant, four only are come down to us; but they are abundantly sufficient to confirm our faith in the truth of the facts. The external evidence of the authenticity of these books is remarkably strong; and an attentive reader will be equally struck with the internal evidence, to which my observations on the harmony of their histories relate. None but the persons to whom they are ascribed, or, which is the same thing, with respect to us, persons who enjoyed equal advantages for writing such histories, could have composed them.

It is the more probable that they wrote from their memory, and therefore that they actually heard and saw what they relate, as there is not, on the face of their writings, a single trace of imagination, or of an attention to any thing that might serve to embellish their narrative. From the beginning to the end of all the evangelists, there appear no more marks of a capacity for fiction, than there are of an inclination to it.

Two of these historians, Matthew and John, were, in a great measure, eye witnesses of what they relate. The two others, Mark and Luke, were not eye witnesses, but appear to have been well informed concerning their subject. They all, however, seem to have been equally careless of the order of events; but with respect to the two former, nature has more than supplied

plied the place of art. As the circumstances of time and place are necessarily presented to the mind of an eye witness, along with other circumstances of any transaction, because they were really co-existent, and inseparable from it, so the ideas of time and place will force themselves upon the mind; and, unless the person who relates from his memory be particularly upon his guard, they will, even unnecessarily and improperly, intrude themselves into the narrative.

This we see exemplified every time that a person, uninstructed in the arts of speaking and writing, tells a story; and we have examples of it in the writings of Matthew and John, where we perceive more characters of time, and more marks of an orderly narrative, in the transitions from story to story, than in those of Mark and Luke. Mark, however, has preserved more of these circumstances of events than Luke; so many that I can hardly persuade myself that he was not present, at least, at some of the transactions. And I think I have heard of an old tradition in favour of his having been one of the seventy disciples.

Many good reasons may be assigned for the neglect of the order of time in those evangelists who were best acquainted with it. This is by no means the most natural, or the best method of relating events, as we see verified in every writer of lives, even those who are the most methodical and exact; because other relations have a stronger effect upon the mind than that of *time*, particularly a resemblance in the *cause* or *effect* of any incidents

Several circumstances would contribute to throw irregularity into a history of Christ, written by one who was witness to it, and had often told it. It is probable that what was called *preaching Christ*, at the promulgation of christianity, consisted chiefly

chiefly in reciting the particulars of the life of Christ; so that the gospels were the substance of the preaching, as it may be called, of the apostles and evangelists. In this case it cannot be supposed that they regularly began with the birth and ended with the death of Christ; but rather that single incidents would be related occasionally, as particular occasions called for them; and, in time, all the stories would get quite other associations, and be connected with one another various ways besides that of the order in which they happened; and the longer they deferred writing their histories, the fewer traces we may expect to find of this order. According to Dr. Lardner, the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, were all written about the year of Christ 64, and that of John in 68.

The causes that tended to make the evangelists inattentive to the order of time in which things happened, would not in the least tend to alter or deprave the history itself, or make their testimony to all the facts the less to be depended on. For as every distinct story would necessarily be repeated intire, they would each of them fall into one uniform method of telling it; and all the parts of any story would cohere perfectly, when the connection of the different stories with one another might be intirely lost. Besides, independent of constant and uniform repetition, the contiguous part of one thing cannot but have a closer connection in the mind that contemplates them, than any two different things.

It has been thought by many, and especially Dr. Henry Owen, that there are evident traces of Mark and Luke having copied or abridged Matthew, because they sometimes make use of the same expressions in relating the same things. But it appears to me that every thing of this nature may very easily have arisen from the manner in which I suppose the gospels were originally written, *viz. in detached parts.* Some
of

of these might have been committed to writing by the Apostles themselves, and some by their auditors, corrected by themselves.

Many of these detached histories would, from the circumstances in which they were written, and transmitted, acquire considerable authority, and would naturally be collected by Mark, Luke, and others, who had a scheme of compiling a regular history. Matthew himself, knowing them to be of authority (some of them probably being his own) and having no ambition to distinguish himself as a mere *writer*, might adopt them; and thus it might come to pass that, though these evangelists compiled their histories independently of one another, they would in some places seem to have copied one another, or some common original. At the same time that their differences, both with respect to the arrangement of facts, and several circumstances respecting the facts themselves, abundantly prove that they had never seen each others writings.

If the gospel of Mark be an abridgement of that of Matthew, it is such an abridgement, I will venture to say, as was never made of any other work. This appears to me to be so obvious, that I wonder how any person can peruse the two histories, and entertain the least suspicion of it.

The hypothesis mentioned above, of the history of Christ having been written originally in detached parts, will help us to account for the same things being sometimes placed together in different gospels, though they had no natural connection. For it might happen that they were both originally contained in the same detached memoir, and had been copied from the same by more writers than one. Instances of this kind, which I cannot so well account for in any other way, will occur in some of the ensuing remarks.

If we consider the immediate object of the apostles and evangelists in preaching Christ, namely, to make their hearers good men, to affect mankind with a sense of the truth and greatness of his character, that they might live in the firm belief and expectation of his second coming, we shall not wonder at their not being solicitous about the order of the incidents in their history; for this was a circumstance that had little apparent tendency to produce that effect. In this situation of things, it cannot be expected that persons who had not attended Christ, should ever get a distinct and orderly idea of the particulars of his life, since they who once had it would be in great danger of losing it.

I would observe farther, that the confusion that appears in our copies of the evangelists, with respect to the order of time, may have arisen in part from the *transposition* of paragraphs and sections in their works; nor is it difficult to account for this kind of disorder. The evangelists having had no experience in writing books, and, except Luke, perhaps not having at first intended to write the life of their master in so full a manner as they have done, it is not improbable that they might write it, and even suffer it to be copied, in detached parts. Or, when they had completed their first plans, they might, on farther consideration, and more perfect recollection, compose additional parts, and give directions where to insert them in the former copies; which directions may have been mistaken by the persons whose copies have been transmitted to us. Or the writers themselves, when they had made those additions, might not be very attentive to the place in which they inserted them; as nothing, that they could imagine to be of any consequence, depended upon it.

That none of the imperfect books are come down to us is no wonder, as every person, who was possessed of a copy, would
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be desirous to make it complete, and such copies only would be used by transcribers. Nor is it at all difficult to conceive how a copy, not the most perfect in point of *arrangement*, might come to be universally followed, when it was recommended by some higher consideration. Even the early versions may have been various with respect to the arrangement of facts at first, and the order of the prevailing, or standard, copies of the original Greek have been afterwards adopted by the transcribers of them. I would also refer my readers, for other causes of transposition, to what Virgilius has observed on that subject, in the *Theological Repository*, vol. 1. p. 45, &c.

On all these accounts, whether I be censured as a bold and rash critic or not, I think I may have reason and natural probability on my side, when I venture to transpose some parts of the evangelical history as it stands at present, if by this means the facts have a better connection.

These observations respect the gospels of Matthew and John only. The irregularities of Mark and Luke may be accounted for without any such hypothesis. It seems highly probable that Luke was never himself acquainted with the order of the occurrences, though he took pains to inquire concerning the truth of the facts, and arranged them in the best manner that he could.

I also pay but little regard to the order of Matthew's gospel, before the history of his own call to attend upon Jesus; and it is remarkable that, before that event, this evangelist has as few notes of time, or other marks of an orderly narrative as Luke. Of this circumstance any person may satisfy himself, who will take the pains to look into his gospel with that view.

In many cases I am by no means satisfied with the attempts of any of the harmonists, that I have seen, to reconcile the different accounts of what was manifestly the same transaction. There appear to me evident marks of the historians having conceived differently concerning the circumstances of them, and I shall be far from concealing any of the observations I have made of this kind. I have observed before, that such variations are favourable to the credibility of the account.

In some cases, however, though the stories are told in a very different manner, the inconsistencies are only seeming ones, and when examined more closely will be found to vanish. I would gladly have taken some pains on this subject, but that I find I have been more than sufficiently anticipated by my predecessors in the business of harmonizing. There is more room for being original in observing, or even in *acknowledging*, the variations and seeming contradictions in the different evangelists.

Notwithstanding all these sources of confusion and disorder in the evangelical history, it seems very possible for a person, who carefully attends to the nature of the events, and who will collect and compare all the notes of time, and other connections of particular events, that have been preserved by any of them, to reduce the narrative pretty nearly to its proper order.

In order to this, I have made Matthew and John my principal guides, and have not departed from the order of events in either of them, unless when the account of one of them is contrary both to those of Mark and Luke, and also not so probable in itself. But I have made the less difficulty of departing from the order of events in our copies of Matthew and John, where I thought there was reason to suspect that the parts of their narratives

ratives may have been transposed; and if this treatment will restore Matthew or John to the order of both Mark and Luke, I cannot but consider it as an argument in favour of the transposition.

SECTION XII.

Observations on the Order of Events before the Mission of the Twelve Apostles.

§ 1. *Of the Time when John the Baptist knew Jesus.*

IT is evident, from John i. 33, that John the Baptist did not know Jesus till he saw the spirit of God descending and remaining upon him, and yet it is equally evident from Matt. iii. 13, that John did know Jesus when he came to his baptism, and before that descent of the spirit which immediately followed his baptism, mentioned by himself, as well as by Mark and Luke; and yet none of the evangelists speak of any intercourse that they had together before his baptism.

To reconcile this, some have supposed a descent of the spirit upon Jesus seen by John some time before his baptism. But I cannot say that this appears to me to be an easy solution of the difficulty. Besides one would imagine from the narrative of Matthew, who relates this conversation between Jesus and John, that he came directly from Galilee on purpose that he might be baptised,

baptised, leaving no room for any intervening acquaintance. :
 "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to
 "be baptised of him."

I own I do not see how to reconcile the different accounts of the evangelists relating to this circumstance in any manner that gives me entire satisfaction. That John knew Jesus by some powerful impression upon his mind when he presented himself to be baptised, which Dr. Doddridge supposes, *Family Expofitor*, vol. 1, p. 101, appears to me not sufficiently reconcileable with what John himself says, viz. that he did not know him but by a sign from heaven.

§ 2. *Of the Time when Jesus cured Peter's Wife's Mother.*

I observed before, that, in that part of the evangelical history which precedes the call of Matthew, there are few traces of an orderly connection of events in his gospel. Since Mark, therefore, has inserted the notes of time belonging to that part of the history with remarkable particularity, for a person who is not supposed to have been present, I prefer his order, especially where it is the same with that of Luke.

Mark, for example, is so express in saying that Jesus cured Peter's wife's mother on the sabbath after his arrival at Capernaum, and the very same day on which he cured the demoniac in the synagogue, and performed those other astonishing miracles which occasioned his great reputation in those parts, and made it inconvenient to him to continue in the town any longer, that I cannot but adopt his order, in preference to that of Matthew; who mentions those events later in the history, but before the time of his own call to attend Jesus.

§ 3. *Of*

§ 3. *Of the Time when Jesus visited Nazareth.*

Matthew, after mentioning Jesus's leaving Judea to go into Galilee, says, iv. 13. *And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum*; which seems to imply that Jesus made, at least, a short stay at Nazareth before his arrival at Capernaum. But it appears to me, that when Jesus left Judea to go into Galilee, after the first passover, he either was not at Nazareth at all, or only just went through it in his way to Cana, from which place it is certain he went to Capernaum.

John makes no mention of Jesus's being at Nazareth, though he is very particular in reciting the events of the first passover, and the several stages and incidents of his progress from Jerusalem to Capernaum at that time, which are omitted by all the other evangelists.

There is a kind of chasm between the 43d and the 44th verse of the fourth Chapter of John, which can only be supplied by supposing the evangelist had mentioned, or at least tacitly referred to Jesus's not chusing to call, or at least not chusing to make any stay at Nazareth at this time.

John iv. 43. *Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee.*

[But he did not go to Nazareth.]

44. *For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet has no honour in his own country.*

45. *Then when he was come into Galilee the Galileans received him,*

him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem; for they also went unto the feast.

46. *So Jesus came again into Cana, &c.*

The evangelist's mentioning the Galileans receiving Jesus as soon as he came into their country, doth but ill agree with what Jesus himself observed, in the verse preceding, that a prophet has no honour in his own country, but upon the supposition, that those he first applied to were not his countrymen of Nazareth.

Besides, the nobleman of Capernaum, who is said to have set out to meet our Lord as soon as he heard of his arrival in Galilee, went to Cana; so that it is not probable that he had heard of his being, or at least of his intention, or attempt to make any stay at Nazareth. And the cure of this nobleman's son is expressly said by John iv. 54, to have been the second miracle that Jesus performed after his arrival in Galilee from Judea; meaning, probably, from the time of his being baptised; and that the first miracle was that at Cana of turning the water into wine.

The miracles related by Mark v. 23, &c. and which were performed at Capernaum, seem to have been the more immediate occasion of Jesus's great fame in Galilee; and therefore must have been performed soon after his arrival in that country.

It is possible, after all, that by *leaving Nazareth* (καταλιπὼν Ναζαρεθ) Matthew might mean his having left it, or the family having quitted their habitation there, some time before; for the participle being of the *aorist* tense, it ought to have been rendered *and having left Nazareth*.

Or

Or it may mean *passing by Nazareth, i. e.* not chusing to call there; he went rather to Capernaum.

Luke, indeed, seems to have imagined that Jesus preached a sabbath in Nazareth, when they attempted his life, before his going to Capernaum; but it is much more probable, from the accounts of both Matthew and Mark, that the time when Jesus was rejected by the people of Nazareth was some time after he had been at Capernaum; and upon the whole, it appears to me to have been just before the mission of the Twelve, and not long before his leaving Galilee to go to the feast of Pentecost.

Besides, Luke's own account, compared with itself only, has not the marks of perfect consistency; for, according to him, our Lord says to the people of Nazareth, *iv. 23. Ye will say, Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thine own country.* If this could have been said before he had been at Capernaum, it must have been by way of prophecy, concerning what he was to do there, and what they would say to him afterwards, which I think is not an easy interpretation. The mention that Luke makes of his arrival at Capernaum, after his rejection at Nazareth, has all the marks of its being his first arrival at that place, *iv. 31. And he came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath-day; and they were astonished at his doctrine, for his word was with power.* These were evidently the effects of their first hearing him.

§ 4. *At what Time Jesus entered Capernaum.*

It is not quite certain whether Jesus had entered Capernaum before the call of Peter, &c. or not. If he had, it should seem

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that he could not have made any stay there before that transaction, or have done any thing to make him conspicuous (except the cure of the nobleman's son performed at Cana) for it was on the sabbath after the call of Peter that his very great fame in that place commenced. Matthew mentions his *dwelling at Capernaum* before the call of Peter, but Mark doth not mention his entering that city till after that event. One would naturally conclude from the account of Mark, that Jesus, travelling from Cana towards Capernaum, came to some part of the sea coast, where he met with Peter and the other disciples; and having called them to attend him, entered with them into the city, just before the commencement of the sabbath-day.

§ 5. *Of the Call of Peter, &c. to attend Jesus.*

Luke speaks of the call of Peter, &c. as an event subsequent to our Lord's preaching in Capernaum and the neighbouring towns, and mentions the additional circumstance of the miraculous draught of fishes as preceding their call. Those disciples certainly attended Jesus before the sabbath on which he healed Peter's wife's mother; and they can hardly be supposed to have been called in the very same manner (our Lord using the very same words) twice. If the first call, related by Matthew and Mark, was not effectual, there seems to have been nothing in the second, supposed by some to be related by Luke, to make it more so. I therefore suppose that they had only one call to attend Christ after his arrival in Galilee. Indeed, from the manner in which Luke relates the circumstances of this call, it is evident that he had no idea of any other call having preceded it. It must be observed that Peter and Andrew, and perhaps James and John also, had been the disciples of Jesus in Judea, and therefore were prepared to obey his call.

§ 6. *Of the Sermon on the Mount.*

The discourse commonly called *the sermon on the mount*, related Matt. v. vi and vii, and the discourse related Luke vi. 20, &c. called by some *the sermon on the plain*, agree in so many circumstances, both in the subject of them, and the incidents attending them, that I have no doubt that they were the same. They both followed our Lord's having retired to a mountain, were addressed to the disciples, in the presence of multitudes assembled from the same places. They begin and end with the same words, and there is no other difference in the contents of them, but that the discourse in Matthew is fuller, and has several things omitted by Luke. Both the discourses are followed by Jesus's going into Capernaum, and healing the Centurion's servant. Any person, and especially one in the circumstance of a public teacher, may well be supposed to have occasion to repeat the same discourses, but that so many of the same incidents should attend the same discourse is not probable. Matthew's saying that Jesus was *sat down* after he had gone up the mountain, and Luke's saying that he *stood* on the plain when he healed the sick before the discourse, are no inconsistencies; or, if they were, are of no moment at all, considering that we do not know that either of these historians were present. It is not, however, improbable but that Matthew, who lived in that neighbourhood, might be one of the multitude that attended on the occasion, and his relating the discourse so circumstantially and fully is much in favour of this conjecture.

With respect to the circumstances preceding the discourse, they were, perhaps, as follows: Jesus had been up in the mountain, along with his disciples, but seeing the multitudes at the foot of it, he came down among them on the plain, and healed

their sick; and then went a little way up the hill, or ascended some eminence at the foot of it, for the advantage of being better heard, while he discoursed to the people still standing on the plain.

It is very possible, as Mr. Whiston supposes (see his *Harmony*, p. 127,) that the Lord's prayer might be delivered to the apostles twice, once in the course of the sermon on the mount, and afterwards in the circumstances mentioned by Luke. I have placed them together for the sake of comparison, especially as there is nothing very particular in the connection in which Luke introduces it.

§ 7. *Where the Leper was cured.*

According to Luke, the leprous person, who applied to our Lord after the sermon on the mount, was cured in a certain city; but according to Matthew, it was after he came down from the mountain, and before he entered into Capernaum. It probably happened in some other town that he went through, in his way to Capernaum.

§ 8. *Of the Time when Matthew was called to attend Jesus.*

From the time that Matthew was called to attend upon our Lord, I think his authority indisputably preferable to that of Mark or Luke, or even to them both. I have, therefore, adopted his account of the order of events on the day that he was called, the particulars of which he can least of all be supposed ever to have forgotten. He says, ix. 18, that it was while Jesus was talking with the disciples of John, after dining at his house, that Jairus came to desire him to cure his daughter. But both

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Mark and Luke expressly say, that Jairus met him with this request as he landed, after having been over the sea, where he had stilled the tempest, and cured the demoniacs among the tombs; and they mention the call of Matthew a considerable time before.

§ 9. *Of the Sabbath on which the Disciples plucked the Ears of Corn, &c.*

According to Luke, the sabbath on which the disciples plucked the ears of corn, was not the same with that on which Jesus restored the withered hand in the synagogue. But it should seem that Matthew and Mark, according to the easiest construction of their language, suppose both these events to have happened on the same day.

After reciting the discourse in the corn-fields, Matthew says, xii. 9, *And when he was departed thence* [*i. e.* probably from the corn-fields] he went into their synagogue, *i. e.* the synagogue belonging to the same Jews with whom he had been discoursing. And Mark, after reciting the same discourse, says, iii. 1, *And entering again into their synagogue*, as if he had been there before on the same day. And, according to Reland, the Jews did assemble in their synagogues both morning and evening, on the sabbath, as well as on certain other days. I therefore suppose the two sabbaths mentioned by Luke (who certainly was not so well informed as Matthew, and probably not so well as Mark) to have been only one. The meaning of the word *δεῦτε πορεύσασθε* is so very uncertain, that no interpretation of it can afford a sufficient foundation for the disposition of the fact to which it relates. Mr. Whiston renders it *the first sabbath after the second day of the passover*. But it is not probable that Jesus could have returned from Jerusalem into Galilee so soon;

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as this sabbath must, in general, have been, within the seven days of the feast.

§ 10. *Of the Discourse concerning the Sin against the Holy Ghost.*

The discourse concerning the sin against the Holy Ghost is introduced by Luke after his account of the cure of the dumb demoniac, which is related by Matthew ix. 22, &c. But this evangelist introduces it after the cure of a demoniac that was both blind and dumb, mentioned xii. 22, &c. I have followed the order of Matthew. It is possible, however, that they may not really differ; as the demoniac mentioned by Luke might have been blind as well as dumb, though he has not mentioned that circumstance.

§ 11. *Of the Time when the Mother and Brethren of Jesus inquired for him.*

Luke (viii. 19) represents our Lord's mother and brethren inquiring for him after he had related the parable of the sower, but according to Matthew and Mark, this inquiry was made after the discourse concerning the sin against the Holy Ghost, which the former of these evangelists says was delivered in the former part of the same day. In favour of the probability of the former it may be said, that, being pretty late in the day, his relations might think he would be quite exhausted; and in favour of the latter, that his subject would lead him to speak with peculiar earnestness and vehemence. Luke seems not to have supposed that the parable of the sower was delivered from a ship.

§ 12. *Of the Observation concerning the Candle and the Bushel, &c.*

The observation concerning the candle and the bushel, and the admonitions, *Take heed how ye hear, and To him that hath shall more be given*, follow one another in the same order in Mark and Luke; and are in both introduced after the parable of the sower. In Mark they are succeeded by another parable concerning sowing. But in Matthew all the above mentioned particulars make part of the sermon on the mount. I make no difficulty of admitting that our Lord might repeat the same observations and admonitions again and again; but I do not think that the place assigned to these in Mark and Luke is quite natural. But that both these writers, who, I am persuaded, had not seen each other's gospels till they had composed their own, should arrange these things, that appear to have little or no connection, in the same order, is rather remarkable. It is not, however, the only instance of the kind, that will occur to a person who shall attentively peruse the gospels. I sometimes think that these seemingly odd coincidences may have arisen from their having seen one another's gospels, after they had written their own, and adding from the others (but in their own words and manner) what they thought proper; or they might both make use of such notes or detached parts of the history of Jesus, taken from the mouths of the Apostles, as might contain them both.

§ 13. *Of what followed the Parable of the Sower.*

Mark says, iv. 36. that after Jesus had delivered the parable of the sower, &c. from the ship, they took him even as he was

in the ship; that at this time he stilled the tempest, and, landing on the other side, cured the demoniacs. But, according to Matthew, xiii. 36. Jesus *went into a house* after delivering those parables, and the voyage cross the sea, when he cured the demoniacs, had happened before. Both those writers are very express in noting these very different circumstances of this transaction. I have adhered to the account of Matthew, as unquestionably an eye witness.

SECTION XIII.

Observations concerning the Time of the Mission of the Twelve.

AS Matthew makes no mention of any appointment of the Twelve before the time when they were sent out to preach, and both Mark and Luke expressly say, that they were called to be with our Lord, some time before, with a view to their future mission; I have supplied the defect of Matthew from those other Evangelists: and I have preferred Mark's account of the time of this event to that of Luke, because, according to the latter, it preceded the sermon on the mount, when, according to Matthew, who must have been the best informed in this case, he himself was not called to attend upon Jesus. And as both Mark and Luke expressly say that he then chose twelve, I can hardly think that he chose no more than eleven at that time, and afterwards made the number twelve by the call of Matthew.

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It will be no objection to the appointment of the Twelve at this time, that their mission followed so soon after; for, in fact, all the Twelve, except Matthew, had actually attended Jesus ever since his first appearance in Galilee; and as Matthew seems to have resided at Capernaum, it is probable that he had both heard and seen much of Jesus, and particularly that he had heard the sermon on the mount, which was delivered in that neighbourhood.

It tends to confirm the supposition of this being the time when the apostles were really appointed, that *the Twelve* are never mentioned in the account of any transaction previous to this time of their nomination, though that expression doth occur afterwards, as Mark iv. 10.

I have chosen, however, to depart from the authority of Matthew, at least from the present order of his gospel, with respect to the time of the mission of the Twelve, and the inquiry that John made concerning him, which is connected with it.

Matthew places these events immediately after those of the day in which he himself was called, and before the account of the disciples plucking the ears of corn; and consequently a considerable time before our Lord's arrival at Nazareth, where Mark and Luke place it. I prefer the order of Mark and Luke for the following reasons.

1. According to the present order of Matthew, the mission of the Twelve follows the call of Matthew so closely, that it can hardly be supposed, that, simple as the business of their preaching then was, he could be sufficiently instructed for the purpose of his mission. Indeed, according to this order, the other eleven had not been called more than a few days before, and therefore cannot be supposed to have been much better

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qualified; whereas, upon my hypothesis, the Twelve had been appointed, and had attended upon our Lord much longer.

2. According to the present order of Matthew's gospel, Jesus pronounces the *woe* upon Chorazin and other places in that neighbourhood, xi. 20. before he had made one half of his stay in Galilee for that time; whereas it is more natural to suppose, with Mark and Luke, that he pronounced it just before his taking leave of Galilee, in order to go to Jerusalem, when the inhabitants of those cities had had more opportunities of seeing his miracles, and hearing his instructions.

Upon the whole, I think it easier to suppose a transposition of those parts of Matthew's gospel, than that this evangelist should give an account of things so much less natural and probable than Mark and Luke; and I think that several arguments may be drawn from the state of Matthew's gospel itself, in favour of a transposition of all that intervenes between ch. ix. 34, and the end of the eleventh chapter; and to conclude, that it was originally placed at the end of the thirteenth chapter.

3. Not the least objection can arise to this transposition from comparing the present connection of the part to be transposed with the new connection, but, on the contrary, something in favour of it; as Jesus's going about teaching in the cities and villages, ix. 35. and sending out his apostles, seems more naturally to follow his being rejected at Nazareth, a country in which he had not preached before, and where he knew that his stay was to be very short, than any thing that is related antecedent to it in the present arrangement;

4. The transposition is more easily accounted for by considering, that the very same words, *at that time* (ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ) follow the transposed parts, both in their present situation and

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in that in which I would place them. There is also something similar in the sense of what precedes the present and the supposed place of these transposed parts. For, as they now stand, they follow the account of the unbelief of the Pharisees, who ascribed the miracles of Jesus to the prince of demons; and where I would place them, they would follow the account of the unbelief of his own countrymen, who, because they knew his family, could not conceive how he should be so much distinguished.

5. Matthew's account, as it now stands, is such a contradiction to that of Mark and Luke, as one would chuse to avoid, if it could be done without much violence to the text. Mark and Luke are express in asserting, that the Twelve returned from their mission on the day that Jesus fled from Herod, and just before the feeding of the five thousand. If this were so, it must be contrary to truth to represent the Twelve as in company with our Lord in any transaction that intervened between their mission and this retreat; but in this interval Matthew places the story of the corn-field, and many other transactions, in which the disciples (among whom, I believe, it is universally supposed, in this case, that the Twelve are included, if they were not principally meant) are expressly said to have been with him.

6. Matthew himself seems to mention a return of the Twelve, as after some separation, at the time of this retreat, though not so particularly as Mark and Luke, *Matt. xiv. 5. And when it was even, the disciples came unto him.* And it is the more probable that the return after their mission was intended, since Matthew makes no other mention of their return, and it is at the very same time precisely which the other evangelists fix for their return.

7. When Jesus fled from Herod, after the death of John, not only do Mark and Luke represent him as being without his disciples, but Matthew also seems to suppose him in the same circumstances; for he says, xiv. 12. *And when Jesus heard it he departed thence, and the people followed him.* But if the disciples were with him at this time, as Matthew, according to the present order of his gospel, represents, since no separation is mentioned, they must have been with him then also, contrary to the express assertion of the other evangelists.

8. Admitting this transposition, all the neighbouring events in the history of Jesus have an easy connection, and all the three evangelists agree in their arrangement of them; all of them representing the cure of the sick of the palsy, and the call of Matthew as preceding the sabbath on which the disciples plucked the ears of corn; that about this time the Twelve were appointed, and that upon our Lord's removal to Nazareth, and being rejected there, he went to preach in other cities and villages; and that not having been in their neighbourhood since the commencement of his public ministry, and seeing great multitudes in want of instruction, he sent the Twelve, two and two, to preach to them. This contributed to spread the fame of Jesus more than ever. John at this time sent to enquire concerning him. Herod also was alarmed, and probably threatening to seize him and his disciples, who were all in his territories, they all flee out of his dominions into those of his brother Philip, and meet the same day. Upon this supposition, also, the woe pronounced upon Chorazin, &c. is late and seasonable, as was observed before.

Whatever be thought of this proposed transposition, the order of Mark and Luke is certainly much more natural and probable than the present order of Matthew; which, considering

ing that Matthew was present in all the transactions, and the other evangelists not, is not easily accounted for.

SECTION XIV.

Observations on the Order of Events from the Mission of the Twelve Apostles to Jesus's triumphant Entry into Jerusalem.

§. 1. *Of the Duration of John's Imprisonment.*

AS Matthew connects the inquiry that John made concerning Jesus immediately with the mission of the apostles, and Mark (vi. 14,) connects the alarm of Herod at the miracles of Jesus with the same event, it is probable that John was put to death soon after his sending those disciples; and supposing that he lived till their return, he died in the fullest satisfaction concerning the mission of Jesus, that himself or his disciples could want. As John was thrown into prison presently after the passover, and was beheaded a little before Pentecost, it may be concluded that he lay in prison about five weeks.

§ 2. *Of the Time when Jesus pronounced the Woe on the Cities of Galilee.*

Luke represents our Lord as pronouncing the woe upon Chorazin, &c. in the hearing of the seventy disciples, after giving

giving them their instructions; but according to Matthew, xi. 20, it was pronounced in the hearing of the people, after the discourse concerning John, when the Twelve were not with him. It is not improbable but that our Lord might have used the same expressions more than once or twice. I have inserted this discourse where I suppose it was first used. Luke might introduce it where he has done, as being most pertinent on our Lord's taking his final leave of Galilee.

If it be said that our Lord's exclamation against the cities of Galilee, which had not hearkened to his instructions, comes too soon after his arrival in Galilee from Judea, being not more than four weeks; I answer that, besides that *one* solemn exhortation delivered in each of the places particularly mentioned would sufficiently authorize it, our Lord had been in Galilee before the passover, having at Cana changed the water into wine. Besides, this solemn denunciation might refer to what would be the consequence of *all* his preaching in Galilee, which continued till the feast of Tabernacles, that is, all the summer or the best part of the year: and being delivered at this time, it might be kindly intended as an admonition to them, with respect to his future preaching to them.

§ 3. *Whither the Disciples went after the feeding of the Five Thousand.*

Mark says, vi. 45, that Jesus, after feeding the five thousand, sent the disciples by ship to *Bethsaida*. John says, vi. 17, it was *towards Capernaum*; but both those places were on the same side of the lake, and not far from one another.

§ 4. *Of Jesus's Journey to Jerusalem at the Feast of Pentecost.*

Since Matthew, Mark, and Luke omit any mention of Jesus's going to Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost, it seems probable that he went alone, and that he made no long stay. In the fifth chapter of John, where only we have any account of this journey, it is said that *Jesus went up*, but his disciples are not so much as mentioned in the whole chapter. Perhaps he did not perform that journey on foot, that he might be as little as possible from Galilee, to which country he seems to have devoted all the first part of the year, viz. from the passover to the feast of Tabernacles. His disciples, if they did go to the feast, might travel in the same manner, and perhaps be dispersed among their acquaintance in Jerusalem.

§ 5. *Of the Proper place for the Incidents mentioned by Luke from ch. ix. 51, to xviii. 14.*

From ch. ix. 51. to xviii. 14. Luke seems to relate what passed after Jesus took his final leave of Galilee, in order to reside chiefly in Judea, during the remainder of his ministerial year. This appears to me sufficiently to account for the manner in which this part of his history is introduced, *And it came to pass when the time was come that he should be received up*. If we refer these incidents to the feast of Dedication, we still depart from the literal sense of the words (on the most probable supposition, that *αναληψις* means his ascension to the Father, after the completion of his ministry) and it is impossible to find room for them in the history subsequent to his journey to Jerusalem, at the last passover, when only the time was actually come that he should be received up.

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Besides, in this part of his work, Luke seems to relate, without much regard to the order of time, a number of instructions and parables, many of which must have been delivered before either the sending out, or the return of the Seventy, mentioned x. 17. This evangelist, however, seems to have imagined, that they were all delivered about the time of his last departure from Galilee to Jerusalem.

Those of these incidents and discourses, that cannot be paralleled in Matthew, or any other evangelist, I thought I could not do better than throw all together, between the feast of Tabernacles (at, or soon after which, the Seventy probably returned) and the feast of Dedication.

§ 6. *Of the Parable of the Mustard Seed and of the Leaven.*

The parables of the mustard seed, and of the leaven, mentioned Luke xiii. 18, are related in different circumstances by Matthew; but as they are mentioned by Luke in immediate connection with the account of our Lord's travelling towards Jerusalem, it may perhaps be most adviseable to repeat them in a complete harmony.

§ 7. *Of the Discourse concerning hating a Man's Father and Mother.*

There is a passage, parallel to that of Luke xiv. 25. concerning a man's *hating his father and mother, &c.* in Matt. xvi. 32. In Matthew, however, it is related as spoken to his disciples in private, but in Luke to a great multitude.

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§ 8. *Of the Discourses delivered beyond Jordan.*

The discourses recorded Matt. xix 3, &c. appear, by their connection, to have been delivered beyond Jordan; and they also appear to have immediately preceded Jesus's last journey to Jerusalem. We must, therefore, suppose the evangelist omitted all that passed between our Lord's leaving this country to his return to it, mentioned by John only. From their introduction in Matthew and Mark, they would seem to have been delivered immediately upon his first arrival in that country from Galilee (Matt. xix. Mark x. 1) but as the conclusion of them is immediately connected with the account of his last journey from thence to Jerusalem, every incident of which must have made the deepest impression on their memories, I think it most probable that they were delivered then.

§ 9. *Of the Place where the Infants were brought to Jesus.*

According to Matthew and Mark the infants were brought to Jesus, and the question concerning eternal life was asked beyond Jordan; but Luke (xviii. 15). represents them as happening only in the way to Jerusalem, without mentioning the country beyond Jordan. This evangelist seems not to have imagined that Jesus went thither at all, in his journey from Galilee: for he only mentions his passing through Samaria, though he doth mention his coming to Jericho, which was in his way from beyond Jordan, and not in his way through Samaria.

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§ 10. *Of the Blind Man cured by Jesus near Jericho.*

The blind man, according to Luke xviii. 35. (compared with xix. 1.) was cured before Jesus entered Jericho, whereas Matthew says expressly, xx. 29. that the miracle was performed *as they departed from Jericho*. This evangelist, who was present, is most to be depended on.

Pilkington, indeed, maintains that the word *εγγιζεν* may signify *to be near*, as well as *to approach*; and in proof of this he says that Luke uses the same word when he is describing the last entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, when he says *εγγιζεν εις Βεθφαρη και Βεθανια*, as he was near to Bethphage and Bethany; because it is evident, from the course of the history, that Jesus was then going not *towards* but *from* Bethphage and Bethany, p. 45. But Luke says nothing of Jesus having been at Bethphage or Bethany, as the other evangelists do, but describes his triumphant entry into Jerusalem as in immediate connection with his journey from Jericho. Luke's idea probably was simply this, that the circumstance he was about to relate happened when Jesus was so far on his way to Jerusalem as to be near Bethphage and Bethany, but before he entered them; and as Jerusalem was at no great distance, it might probably be in view from some part of the road, before his arrival at those two villages.

§ 11. *Of the Parable concerning the Ten Servants, and the Ten Talents.*

The parable related in Luke, xix. 11. concerning the nobleman and his ten servants, and that in Matthew, xxv. 19. concerning the talents, very much resemble one another; but they

they differ in several respects, and the parable in Luke is expressly said to be delivered, *because he was nigh to Jerusalem* (perhaps in the house of Zaccheus) whereas the parable in Matthew was delivered after his last departure from the temple.

§ 12. *Of the Lamentation of Jesus over Jerusalem.*

It seems more probable that our Lord's lamentation over Jerusalem was made when he came in view of the city, in his journey from Jericho to Bethany, than during his triumphant entry into it, as Luke represents. In coming to Bethany he must have been very near Jerusalem, the two places being only fourteen furlongs distant from one another. Besides, so particular a prophecy as our Lord's speech upon this occasion contains (Luke xix. 41.) seems more likely to have been delivered to his particular disciples than to the mixed multitude that attended him in his triumphant entry. As no other evangelist, however, mentions his lamentation, it may seem too bold to set aside the order even of Luke upon mere conjecture.

§ 13. *Of the Supper at Bethany.*

According to Matthew (xxvi. 6) Jesus supped with Simon at Bethany (at which time Mary anointed him with precious ointment) *two days* before the passover, after his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and his discourses in the temple. But John, (xii. 1) expressly says, that this supper was *six days* before the passover, and also, xii. 12, the day before his triumphant entry. In this case we must either make the authority of Matthew yield to that of John, who is the more circumstantial of the two, or we must transpose the account of Matthew; and if

the verses that contain this story in Matthew, xxvi. 6—13; be considered, they will be found to stand very awkwardly in their present situation, where they interrupt an account of a consultation among the Jews about putting Jesus to death. And the whole story, from v. 6. to 13. inclusive, may very easily be taken out, and v. 5. and 14. will have sufficient connection. The gospel of Mark will read equally well with a similar parenthesis, viz. from ch. 14. v. 3, to v. 9, inclusive.

It is not impossible, but that the story might have been written by Matthew after the rest of the history was composed; and, that finding his account of the journey from Jericho, and of the entry into Jerusalem were so connected, xii. 1. that the account of this supper could not be inserted between them (and not being very solicitous about the exact order of his narration) he, or some other person for him, put it, without much circumspection, where it now stands.

It is remarkable, however, and unfavourable to this transposition, that this story in Mark stands precisely in the same connection as it doth in Matthew. It looks as if Mark, when he saw Matthew's gospel, had drawn up an account of the same incident, and inserted it in the same place in his own work.

Or these stories may have happened to be so connected in the notes taken from the apostles preaching, and, being of good authority in other respects, may have gained so much credit, as to have been copied by the evangelists themselves, just as we find them. I hardly know how to account for the remarkable resemblance between the gospels of Matthew and Mark in this case, without having recourse to this supposition; as I am convinced that they had neither of them seen each other's gospel; at least, at the time of their beginning to write.

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It is possible, however, that Matthew and Mark might chuse to introduce the account of the supper at Bethany, after mentioning the last consultation of the Jews to kill Jesus, and of the assistance they received from Judas, by reciting, in that place, the first occasion of Judas's disgust, though it happened some time before; a thing which is very common with historians. Upon the whole, I have adhered to the account of John. Having seen what the other evangelists had written, it may be presumed that, where he differs from them, it was with design, and in order to be more exact.

In one respect the account of Matthew and Mark may be thought to be more probable than that of John. It is evident that the Jews held frequent consultations about putting Jesus to death, particularly at the time of the resurrection of Lazarus; but, according to all the evangelists, Judas was instigated to betray him, by the affront he conceived to be put upon him, in the observation our Lord made about the precious ointment at this supper at Bethany; and it is more probable that he should keep to so base a purpose *two days* only, than *six*. But, on the other hand, there would be more time for consultation upon the other supposition, as it is not so probable that so convenient an opportunity as Judas found should have occurred in two days.

Mr. Whiston, and other harmonists, maintain that the anointing of our Saviour mentioned by John is wholly different from that which is mentioned by Matthew and Mark. But the different circumstances in these stories, on which he lays so much stress, are either inconsiderable, or not absolutely incompatible.

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The anointing mentioned by John was of the *feet*, the other of the *head and the whole body*. But both might have been done at the same time. Of the former only *Judas* complained, of the other, *all the disciples*. But the rest might join in his complaint, though less openly. In the former *Mary* served, the other was in the house of *Simon the leper*. But *Mary*, being a neighbour, and perhaps a relation, might serve in the house of *Simon*.

Mr. Whiston finds a farther difference in the *vindication*, and apologies, which our Saviour made for the woman. "At the former," he says, "our Saviour desires *Judas* not to exclaim against her, as if she had spent abundance of ointment on a ceremony. *Against the day of the preparation for my funeral has she kept it*; as if he had said, she has spent but little of it now, she has reserved the main part of it for a fitter time, the day before my delivery to the Jews. At the latter anointing, Mark says, *she has done what she could. She is come before hand, to anoint my body for the preparation to my funeral*: which words will bear this paraphrase. Because she sees no prospect of an opportunity of embalming my body hereafter, she prevents her intentions as well as she can, by anointing my body thus before hand, instead of it." *Harmony*, p. 129.

But certainly *Mary* had no more expectation of the death of *Jesus* than the other disciples. And it appears to me very extraordinary that, if *Judas* had been reproved by our Lord, with so much severity, four days before, and this very anointing had even been foretold by him, as Mr. Whiston supposes, the other disciples should have been so very inattentive, as to complain of it a second time, and give our Lord occasion to repeat his rebuke.

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The agreement between these histories Mr. Whiston acknowledges to be so great, that there is a great deal of colour for supposing them to be the same; both anointings being, a few days before the passover, performed by the same woman, Mary; in the same place, Bethany; the price of the ointment the very same, three hundred pence; the woman being at both times reproved by others, and being vindicated by our Saviour; most of the company, also, being the same.

Jerusalem is twenty miles from Jericho, so that Jesus could not sup at Bethany and enter in triumph from Jericho the next day. The supper at Bethany, therefore, must intervene between the journey from Jericho and the entry. It is not improbable, but that he might spend a day or two in the family of Lazarus at that time, which might give Simon a proper opportunity of inviting him to his house, and making suitable preparation to receive him.

If we suppose that this Simon the leper was a disciple and friend of Christ, which I think is rather probable (as another would hardly have risked the displeasure of the ruling Jews so much, as to entertain a man who was now become so exceedingly obnoxious to them) and he had previous intimation of Jesus's visit to Bethany, and received him the very night of his arrival, we shall be better able to account for the mistake of Mark, who places the purging of the temple the day after the triumphant entry; whereas it was the day after his arrival in Bethany, two contiguous dates, one of which he may be supposed to have mistaken for the other.

SECTION

SECTION XV.

Observations on the Order of Events from the triumphant Entry into Jerusalem, to the Examination of Jesus before the High-Priests.

§ 1. *Of the Purging of the Temple.*

THE reader will perceive that I have adopted the opinion of Mr. Mann in supposing that Christ purged the temple only once, and that at the last passover. His reasons are the following:

(1) All the other evangelists mention this event as taking place at the last passover.

(2) Such an act of authority is not agreeable to the caution with which our Lord began his public ministry; being accompanied with a public declaration that he was the son of God, or the Messiah, a declaration, which, at that time, he avoided making.

(3) Such an affront to the Jewish priests could not have passed unnoticed or unpunished. And yet some time after it appears, that neither Herod, nor many of the people had heard of Jesus; and six months after this event (a year or two according to other Harmonists) his brethren bade him go and shew himself at Jerusalem.

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(4) If Jesus had made this declaration, accompanied with so high an act of authority, at Jerusalem, would the chief priests have accused him, as in Luke xxiii. 5. of having *begun from Galilee, to pervert the people with his doctrine?*

(5) To these arguments of Mr. Mann, I would add, that none of the evangelists give the least hint of Jesus having purged the temple more than once, and the accounts of them all contain the very same particulars.

(6) The verses that contain this account in John ii. 13—23. seem to have no business in the place where they now stand. For, take them away, and the parts they now disjoin have an easy connection; there being a kind of contrast between our Lord's *disciples only believing on him*, upon seeing *one* miracle at Cana, v. 12. and *many believing on him*, when they saw *many* miracles performed by him at Jerusalem, mentioned v. 23.

Besides, the historian would hardly have chosen to mention its being the passover twice so near together, as at v. 13. and 23, when there could have been no danger of any person having forgotten or mistaken it.

(7) The first intimation that our Lord gave the Jews, that he was the Christ, seems to have been at the feast of Pentecost, John v. 17, and it incited them to seek to slay him. But had he made the same declaration on his purging the temple before, they would hardly have been so much exasperated now on that account.

(8) No objection will arise to this hypothesis from the attention of the Jews being excited concerning Jesus, and the motives of Nicodemus's application to him, on account of the

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want of this exertion of authority; which is by some supposed almost necessary to account for them. For, besides what John the Baptist had done, in bearing witness to Jesus, and pointing him out to the people, and besides the miracle at Cana (the fame of which doth not, indeed, seem to have spread very far) our Lord performed *many miracles* at this very passover in Jerusalem, and on the feast day; as is expressly said, John ii. 23, and iv. 45.

Matthew describes Christ's purging the temple as performed on the very day of his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, before he cursed the fig-tree. But, according to Mark, xi. 15, he only *looked about upon all things*, when he first visited the temple, and, it being even, he went to Bethany; from whence returning, in the morning, he cursed the fig-tree, and then, on the second day of his visiting the temple, he purged it.

It has been said that, though Mark only says that *Jesus looked round about upon all things* on his first visit to the temple, after his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the word which he makes use of (*περιελαβόμενος*) implies the ejection of the buyers and sellers, expressing a look of indignation, reproof, and correction. (See Pilkington, p. 18). It has therefore been supposed that our Lord purged the temple both on that day, and the following. But I own that this appears to me to be a harsh construction of the word. Besides if Mark really knew of the first, as well as of the second purging of the temple, and alludes to both, it would have been more natural for him to have written at large the account of the first purging, rather than that of the second.

§ 2. Of the Prophecy concerning the Destruction of Jerusalem.

What Luke represents our Lord as saying to the Pharisees before he arrived at Jerusalem, concerning the destruction of that

that city, ch. xvii, was not said, according to Matthew and Mark, till after he had taken his final leave of the temple, just before the last passover, and was then communicated to his disciples only, together with what is contained in the 21st chapter of his gospel. I hardly think that Luke's account of the circumstances of this remarkable prophecy, or of his prophetic declarations on his public entry into Jerusalem, are agreeable to the usual caution and reserve of our Saviour in those respects. However the sentiments in Matthew and Luke are so much the same, that in compiling an Harmony, I should chuse to place them together, that they might be more easily compared.

§ 3. *Of Jesus's saying to the Jews, "Ye shall not see me till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord."*

Our Lord's saying to the Jews, *Ye shall not see me till ye say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*, Luke (xiii. 35) supposes to have been pronounced by him in Galilee, before he arrived at Jerusalem; but Matthew (xxiii. 39) supposes that these words were pronounced in the temple, after his triumphant entry.

Grotius would translate the words *εως ου ανθυμει* of Matthew to signify *till ye could wish to say*, referring to his coming to judgment with power and great glory. I can only say with Doctor Doddridge, I wish the words would bear that sense. He paraphrases them thus; "Till your calamities have taught you ardently to wish for the Messiah, and as a nation gladly to receive me under that character." For my own part, I am not quite satisfied with any sense that I have seen put upon these words.

§ 4. *Of the introduction of the Greeks to Jesus, &c.*

The discourses recorded in John xii. 20, &c. seem not to have been delivered on the day that he first entered the temple, and purged it. The Greeks had probably heard of that extraordinary action, and were thereby the more induced to make inquiry concerning him. And the discourses that follow concerning his mission seem very properly to precede those awful parables that relate to the rejection of christianity by the Jews, and that are recorded in Matthew and the other evangelists.

§ 5. *Of the Day of the Passover in the Passion-Week.*

Critics have been exceedingly puzzled to determine whether the Thursday on which Jesus instituted the Lord's supper was the proper day of the Jewish passover; and several circumstances have contributed to make this question of somewhat difficult solution. Had there been no other gospel besides those of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, there would, I think, have been no doubt but that the passover had been on the Thursday, and that our Lord joined in the celebration of it at the same time with the rest of the Jews. On the other hand, had there been no other gospel than that of John, there would have been as little doubt but that Friday had been the day of the passover; and therefore that our Lord either did not celebrate it at all, or that he anticipated the day appointed by the law. All these writers, however, being present at the transaction, it is impossible that they should have had different ideas of the matter.

John calls the day before the triumphant entry into Jerusalem, of which Palm Sunday is a memorial (and therefore on this, as well

well as on other accounts, may be concluded to have been on a Sunday) *the sixth day before the passover*. Ch. xii. v. 1. In relating the transactions of the Thursday, he says not a word about the passover; but on the day following he represents the Jews as refusing to go into Pilate's Judgment-hall, *lest they should defile themselves, but that they might eat the passover*, ch. xviii. v. 28. he calls the same day *the preparation of the passover*, ch. 19. v. 14; and he calls the sabbath following a *high day*, ch. xix. v. 31. as if it was the feast of unleavened bread, which immediately followed the passover. Lastly, it is thought to favour this supposition that Jesus would then die at the very time of the celebration of the passover, while the people were killing the paschal lambs in the temple, which would make a beautiful coincidence of the type with the antitype.

On the other hand, Matthew, speaking of the events of the Thursday, ch. 26. v. 17. calls it *the first day of the feast of unleavened bread*. Mark useth the same expression, ch. 14. v. 12. and farther says that it was *the day when they killed the passover*. Luke also calls it *the day when the passover must be killed*, ch. 22. v. 7. They likewise all of them expressly say, that on the same day *they made ready the passover*, Matt. 26. v. 19. Mark 14. 16. Luke 22. 13. and on the evening of that day Jesus and the twelve Apostles sat down to supper, which, from what went before, it is impossible not to understand of the paschal supper. Luke also represents him as saying, during that supper, ch. 22. v. 15, *With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer. For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God*. From which we could not but take it for granted that he had then eaten of the passover for the last time.

At the same time none of the evangelists give the least hint of there being two days on which the passover might be killed,
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which some have supposed, one for the people of Galilee, and the other for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Besides that the law expressly fixes the killing of the paschal lamb to one particular time, viz. the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month.

I own I am clearly of opinion, that our Lord eat the passover at the precise time appointed by the law, and the same day on which the rest of the Jewish nation celebrated that feast. Indeed, I do not see how he that came *to fulfil all righteousness* should do otherwise; or if he had, that the Jews, who were so attentive to his conduct, would not have made it an article of their charge against him; especially, considering how ready they were to cavil at him for his neglecting to observe their superstitious ceremonies, those for which they could not alledge the authority of Moses or the law; besides it cannot be supposed that any person would have been suffered to transgress the law so publicly as this must have been done.

Dr. Macknight, without seeming to have attended to these considerations, is very decisively of a contrary opinion; maintaining that our Lord anticipated the legal time for eating the passover. He says, p. 94, that the lambs for the passover being by far too numerous to be killed by the priests and Levites, in the short space of time appointed for that service by the law, the people were allowed to perform this service themselves; and, in proof of this, he rightly quotes two passages of Philo; but he did not consider that, though the people were allowed to kill the paschal lambs themselves, they were not allowed to do it when or where they pleased.

We find in Josephus, that it was the universal custom that all the lambs should be killed on the same day, between the hours of nine and eleven, and only in the court of the temple. See also Reland's *Jewish Antiquities*, p. 269. and in one of the
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very passages that Dr. Macknight quotes from Philo, he overlooks an expression which would have satisfied him, that he was quite mistaken in the inference which he drew from it; for in the very passage in which he says the people killed the paschal lambs, without waiting for the Priests, De Decalogo, p. 766, he likewise says that he did it *in crowds*, *ἄνθρωποι πλυνόμενοι αὐτῶν ἐκαστος τὰς ἱερεὺς αὐτῶν καὶ ἀναμεινοντες*: and Josephus, *de Bello Judaico*, Lib. vi. Cap. 9, shows how a computation was made of the number of people assembled in Jerusalem at the time of the passover, by the number of lambs which were killed between the hours of nine and eleven; which would have been no *datum* at all for this conclusion, if every person had been allowed to kill his lamb privately, when and where he pleased, without any public inspection. This would also have been contrary to the most fundamental principles of the Jewish ritual, in which every thing was public, in order to guard against different customs, and abuses.

I therefore take it for granted, that the account of Matthew, Mark, and Luke is strictly just, and that we have misunderstood those expressions in the gospel of John which have led many to entertain a different opinion. In numbering the days before the passover I suppose him to have reckoned from the 15th day of the month, which, indeed, was properly *the feast day*, being the feast of unleavened bread, and a day of holy convocation; and it must have been lest they should defile themselves on that day, that the Jews refrained from going into the Roman Judgment-hall; though I own I should not have expected that he would have expressed this by saying, ch. xviii. v. 28, *that they might eat the passover*.

It is true that the Friday is called *the day of preparation*, Matt. xxvii. 62, Luke xxiii. 5, 6, John xix. 42, but neither in the law of Moses, nor in any other authentic account of the passover, is there any mention of such a day preceding the
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fourteenth of Nisan; and it appears from Mark xv. 42, that the word παρασκευη is of the same meaning with προεβελον, and *now when even was come, because of the preparation, that is the day before the sabbath.* When therefore the Friday is called *the preparation of the passover*, John xix. 14, the meaning can only be, that it was that preparation for the sabbath which fell in the paschal week.

Mr. Mann accounts for the difference between John and the rest of the evangelists, by supposing, with Scaliger, that it was the custom with the Jewish priests, before the ruin of the second temple, to carry over the new moon of Tifri, or Nisan, in certain cases, to the day following, to prevent two holidays coming together; but that this rule being, in the time of our Saviour, of no long standing, was not universally observed; so that he kept the passover on the Thursday, according to the law of Moses, and the Jews, according to their own rule, on the day following. See his *Dissertations*, p. 191. But I believe no instance can be produced of any order of the Jewish high priests, respecting the regulation of the year and of the festivals, not being universally observed, or of any difference of customs among the Jews on such a ground.

§ 6. *Of the Transactions of the Wednesday in the Passion-Week.*

There is no particular transaction of our Lord's recorded for the *Wednesday* of the passion week. For Matthew expressly says, that all the discourses in the temple and about it were finished two days before the passover, which he always places on the Thursday. It should seem, however, that the final agreement between the high-priests and Judas was made on the Wednesday. For this transaction is related by Matthew and Mark immediately after their account of our Lord's discourses
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above mentioned, and before the events of the Thursday following, Matt. xxvi. 14, Mark xiv. 10. Tradition also favours this supposition. For Wednesday is said to have been an ancient fast, in commemoration of the treachery of Judas. See Pilkington. Luke relates this transaction as immediately preceding the events of the Thursday. Luke xxii. 3—6.

§ 5 *Of the Supper at which Jesus washed his Disciples Feet.*

Pilkington, and many other harmonists, contend that the supper at which our Lord washed his disciples feet was not the same with that on which he eat the passover, but one preceding it, at Bethany, and probably the same with that on which Mary anointed him. But it is evident from John, that our Lord foretold Peter's denial of him on the same night on which he washed his disciples feet; so that we are obliged to suppose that our Lord foretold this event twice, and nearly in the same words; which, accordingly, some suppose. But I think it extremely improbable, that, after the very solemn manner in which our Lord had foretold this event once, Peter should deliberately give him a second occasion of doing it, by repeating the same solemn assurances of his fidelity and attachment the day following.

It is evident that there is no place in the gospel of John, in which we can suppose that any thing intervened between the supper on which our Lord washed his disciples feet, and the scene in the garden, but at the end of the fourteenth chapter, where it is said, *Arise, let us go hence*, which is therefore supposed by some to have been spoken at Bethany, and that what follows was delivered after the passover the next day. But these words might have been pronounced by our Lord upon their rising from the table only. And this is the more natural

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supposition, as there is no other mark of the time of the ensuing discourse, which is introduced exactly as it would have been on the supposition of their rising from the table, and our Lord's continuing the discourse either in the same house, or in the open air, on their way into the garden. The very next words after *arise, let us go hence*, are, *I am the true vine, and my father is the husbandman, &c.* Whereas John is particularly careful to note the time and place of all the events and discourses that he relates.

It is said (Pilkington, p. 50) that the construction which the disciples put upon our Lord's saying to Judas, *What thou doest, do quickly*, viz. that he was intimating to him to *buy what they needed against the feast*, implies, that some time must have intervened between that supper and the passover. But the feast continued a whole week.

It is also alledged that it could not properly have been said that *from this time Judas sought an opportunity how he might conveniently betray Jesus, in the absence of the multitude*, unless it had been on some day before the Thursday. But this is not said by John, but by the other evangelists, who date the treacherous design of Judas from the time that our Lord reproved him for his censure of Mary. John only says that, *after the sop Satan entered into him*, and that *when he had received it he went out, it being then night*. But it might have been said more emphatically at this time, though, in fact, Satan or his base designs, had entered into him before.

SECTION

SECTION XVI.

Observations on the Order of Events from the Examination of Jesus before the High-Priest, to the Conclusion of the History.

§ 1. *Of the Insults which Jesus received at the House of the High-Priest.*

LUKE speaks of the denial of Peter, and the insults which Jesus received at the house of the high-priest, as preceding the assembling of the chief priests to examine him, and his confession that he was the Christ. This assembling and examination, he says, were *when it was day*, xxii. 66. Matthew expressly says, that the insults were after his examination, xxvi. 67. Indeed, both Matthew (xxvii. 1.) and Mark (xv. 1.) speak of an assembly of the chief priests when it was day; but this was after his examination, and was only for the purpose of consulting among themselves in what manner they should get their sentence put in execution; and therefore they make no mention of Jesus being brought before them at that time. The resolution which they came to at this second meeting, was to carry Jesus bound to Pilate, which they did immediately.

§ 2 *Of the Circumstances attending Peter's Denial of Jesus.*

There is a pretty considerable variation in the accounts which the different evangelists give of the circumstances attend-

ing Peter's denial of Jesus. According to Matthew, our Lord told Peter, that *before the cock crew, he should deny him thrice*, xxvi. 34. And he represents him as denying him three times distinctly, before the cock crew; the two first times at the interrogation of two different women, and lastly, of those who were *standing by*. xxvi. 69—75.

Mark says, that our Lord told Peter, that *before the cock crew twice, he should deny him thrice*, xiv. 13. And he represents the first cock crowing after the first denial. The two first denials, according to this evangelist, were occasioned by the interrogations of the same woman, and the third, by that of the *standers by*. xiv. 66—72.

Luke, like Matthew, says that Jesus told Peter, that *before the cock crew he should deny him thrice*; xxii. 34. but he represents the first denial only as occasioned by the interrogation of a woman, and the second and third at that of two different men. He also mentions the circumstance of our Lord's *looking at Peter* after the crowing of the cock, as if that alone had not been sufficient to awaken his recollection, xxii. 25—62.

John says, that Jesus told Peter, that *before the cock crew he should deny him thrice*, xiii. 38. and he says that the first denial was at the interrogation of a woman who kept the door, on his entrance (for it is mentioned before the fire is spoken of) the second time at that of several persons who were warming themselves, and the third time at that of a relation of the man whose ear was cut off, and who alledged that he had seen Peter in the garden.

It seems probable that Matthew and John, who heard Jesus, and who were present when Jesus foretold the denial of Peter, have given the true account with respect to the number of cock
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crowings, and that the second crowing of the cock was an addition, which the opposition of *twice* and *thrice* might, perhaps, recommend to those persons from whom Mark (who was not present) had his account. Matthew and John, however, differ with respect to the persons who interrogated Peter. Matthew also mentions no interrogation till after the insults which Jesus met with; and yet having probably heard something of his being interrogated at the door, he speaks of his going to the door afterwards, and being then interrogated the second time.

The account of John, who was in the house at the time, may certainly be depended upon as the most exact, especially as he had seen those of the other evangelists. John makes no mention of Jesus's looking on Peter.

§ 3 *Of the Circumstances which attended the Resurrection of Jesus.*

Much has been written by several modern divines, on the harmony of the different accounts which are given by the four evangelists, of the circumstances attending the resurrection of Jesus; and I believe it may be *possible* to draw up a narrative, which shall comprize all the different accounts, and be consistent with itself; but to me it is evident, that if the different writers had had exactly the same ideas of the circumstances attending that event, they would not have written as they have done concerning it.

Matthew says (xxviii. 1, &c) That Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went, at the break of day, to see the sepulchre, but an angel had rolled away the stone, and sat upon it. The angel bade them tell the disciples that Jesus was risen from the

the dead; and as they were making haste to deliver that message, Jesus himself appeared to them, and they fell down and held him by the feet, but he bade them go and tell his disciples to meet him in Galilee.

Mark says (xvi. 1, &c) That, at sun rise, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, going to anoint the body of Jesus, found the sepulchre open; and going in, saw a young man sitting on the right hand, who told them that Jesus was risen, and bade them tell his disciples to meet him in Galilee. Afterwards this evangelist informs us that Jesus, having risen early in the morning, appeared first to Mary Magdalene, who went and informed the disciples, but was not believed by them.

Luke says (xxiv. 1, &c) That many women who had followed Jesus from Galilee, and others with them, going with spices, found the stone rolled away; and going into the sepulchre found not the body of Jesus; and that while they were in doubt, two men stood by them, who said that he was risen; and that they went and told the disciples, who did not believe them; but that Peter ran to the sepulchre, and seeing the grave cloaths, wondered very much.

John, who is the most circumstantial in his relation, says, (xx. 1, &c) That while it was yet dark, Mary Magdalene went to the sepulchre; and upon seeing the stone taken away, ran to inform Peter and John. Upon this, these two disciples ran to the place, and finding the cloaths only, returned; but that Mary, who stood without, and wept, on looking into the sepulchre, saw two angels, sitting one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body had lain; and while she was asking them concerning the body, Jesus himself appeared to her, and bade her go and tell his disciples that he was risen.

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To me it appears not very easy to suppose that these different accounts were written by persons who had precisely the same ideas of the events, and of the order of them; but the variations are such, that it is not worth the while of any friend of christianity to take pains to reconcile them. After considering and comparing all these accounts, my own ideas of the affair are as follow.

The stone was rolled away from the sepulchre, Jesus rose, and the guard were dispersed, some time before day-break. Presently after, the women came with their spices, intending to embalm the body; but recollecting that the stone was too large for them to remove, they were at a loss what to do; when they were surprized to find it already rolled away, and the body gone. Being exceedingly astonished at this, they dispersed themselves to different places, to inform the disciples of what they had seen; for it is not at all probable, that, in their present state of fear and consternation, they were all together. Mary Magdalene went to Peter and John, who immediately ran to the sepulchre, followed by Mary herself; but staying longer than they did, and looking into the sepulchre, after they were gone, she saw first the two angels, and then Jesus himself.

Supposing the other women not to have quitted the garden, but to have waited for the return of Mary Magdalene, we may allow that they also were favoured with an appearance of Jesus to them, presently after the appearance to Mary, and before they had quitted the garden, when they were all permitted to embrace his feet, according to Matthew.

By this time, it is probable, that most of his disciples were got together, in consequence of the news they had heard, when Mary joined them, and informed them that she had seen Jesus himself,

himself, but they gave no credit to her. Some time the same day, when the disciples were separated, Jesus appeared to Peter alone, Luke xxiv. 34. who upon this, probably assembled as many of the disciples as he could, to inform them of it. After the appearance of Peter, our Lord joined the two disciples who were going to Emmaus, and discovered himself to them; upon which they immediately returned to Jerusalem, and going to the place where the disciples were assembled, were informed by them that Jesus had appeared to Peter; and while they were giving an account of the manner in which he had made himself known to them also, Jesus himself appeared to them, and eat with them. Thomas, being informed of this, would not believe; but that day seven-night, Jesus appeared to them when Thomas was present, and was fully satisfied. After this, all the disciples went to Galilee, where Jesus was seen by them, and the other disciples, many of whom resided in Galilee; and returning to Jerusalem, he ascended to heaven in the presence of many of them, from the Mount of Olives.

I take it for granted, that John would not have given so circumstantial an account, as he has done of the manner in which the resurrection was first notified, if it had not been for the sake of being more exact than the other evangelists had been. I have, therefore, followed his account, and think that the variations in the other evangelists, which cannot be easily reconciled with it, must be ascribed to their being misinformed, and mistaken concerning them. But they are things of no moment, so that the variations with respect to them, serve to make the general account of the resurrection the more, and not the less credible.

All the evangelists, except John, represent the women as having seen the vision of angels before any of them had been with

with the Apostles, but the account which John gives, makes the discovery of the resurrection more gradual and pleasing. It is also to be observed, that the manner in which they describe this vision is remarkably different.

The reader will find much light thrown upon the history of the resurrection in a quarto pamphlet of Dr. Lardner's, intitled, *Observations on Dr. Macknight's Harmony of the four Gospels, so far as relates to the History of our Saviour's Resurrection.* Dr. Macknight has made such a number of arbitrary and improbable suppositions relating to this part of the gospel history, that, instead of succeeding in his attempts to reconcile the different accounts of it, the unwarrantable liberties he has taken with it do, as Dr. Lardner observes, exceedingly *perplex and pervert the history, which must be of bad consequence.* No history, he observes, p. 16, *can stand such treatment.* My account of the order of the events agrees very nearly with that of Dr. Lardner, though it was written without consulting his. We differ in this, that he thinks all the writers had precisely the same ideas of the order of the events, which to me does not appear probable.

ADDITIONAL ARTICLES. (a)

§ 1. *Whether Judas Iscariot partook of the Lord's Supper, considered.*

It appears from John (xiii 30) that Judas left the company of the rest of the disciples immediately after receiving the sop which Jesus gave him. So that if (as seems to be the opinion of most critics) the eating of the sop, which was dipped in the dish, belonged to the paschal supper, Judas did not partake of the Lord's supper which followed it. But it should seem

(a) The two following articles ought to have been introduced before, but were accidentally misplaced.

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from

from Luke (xxii. 21) that Judas was with them both at, and after the institution; for immediately after the account of this ordinance, and of Christ's saying, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you;" he adds, "but behold the hand of him that betrays me is with me on the table," &c. So that if we had no other account of this transaction but that of Luke, we could not have entertained the least doubt, but that Judas received the Lord's supper along with the other apostles.

In Mark xiv. 18, words similar to these last in Luke "Verily I say unto you, one of you which eateth with me shall betray me" are interposed between the account of eating the passover, and that of the institution of the Lord's supper; so that, according to this writer, Judas might, or might not have been present at it; but it rather coincides with the account of John, for it cannot be supposed, that Judas would stay in the company after being so particularly pointed at.

The order of narration is the same in Matthew (xxvi. 21) as it is in Mark, and as this writer represents Judas himself as asking, among the rest, whether he himself was the person that was hinted at, and says that our Lord expressly told him that he was the person; it is still more difficult to conceive that, according to this account, Judas should stay till after the institution of the Lord's supper.

Is it not probable, upon the whole, that Luke, who was not present at this scene, but had his relation from other persons, was mistaken in his conception of this transaction, and that he wrote with the idea, which the perusal of his history necessarily conveys to his readers, viz. that Judas was present at the celebration of the Lord's supper, and partook of it along with the other disciples? Do not Matthew and John clearly suppose the contrary, and as they were themselves present at the transaction, is it not more probable that their account is most to be depended on?

Some

Some may think it more probable that Luke, notwithstanding what has been observed, might have had a just idea of the order of these transactions, but might purposely transpose them, with a view to bring together his accounts of the two questions that were agitated among the apostles at that meeting; one of which was prior to the celebration of the Lord's supper, *viz. which of them should betray him*; and the other posterior to the institution, *viz. which of them should be the greatest*; for after having related the former, he introduces the latter as in connection with it, *and there was also a strife among them, &c.* But it may be replied, that these two debates had no sort of connection (if indeed the former can be called a *strife*, or debate) and therefore did not require to be brought together, especially at the expence of historical truth.

Grotius supposes, that the sop which Jesus gave to Judas, did not belong to the paschal supper, but that it was the bread which he brake, and distributed to them in the institution of his own supper, dipping, or putting his hand into a dish that contained it, every time that he gave any of them a piece. So that this great man would, in a manner, reconcile the account of the evangelists upon the supposition that Judas did receive the bread in the Lord's supper, but not the wine.

Dr. Macknight supposes that Judas partook of the Lord's supper, which, he says, might take up a quarter of an hour, though he is said to have gone out immediately (*ευθως*) after he received the sop belonging to the paschal supper, and though he had been so particularly pointed out as the betrayer of his master. But it sits easier upon my mind to suppose one of the evangelists to have been mistaken, in a thing of so little consequence, than to reconcile them in this manner.

Mr. Wait thinks that the Lord's supper was introduced in the middle of a common supper, which he supposes followed the celebration of the paschal supper, and that Judas partook of them all, along with the rest of the disciples. But what reason is there to suppose that the Jews had any other supper besides the paschal lamb itself, no part of which was to be left till the morning? Besides, is not the supposition of an interruption in this supposed common meal, for the sake of instituting the Lord's supper, very unnatural? And what is gained by reconciling the histories of the evangelists at such an expence of probability?

§ 2. *Of the Time when Jesus foretold Peter's Denial of him.*

It is not easy to fix the time when Jesus foretold Peter's denial of him. Matthew says (xxvi. 31) that it was after they had fet out to go to the mount of Olives; and Mark (xiv. 26) relates the facts exactly in the same order. But according to Luke, xxii. 31—39, the discourse concerning Peter's denial of him was previous to their going to the mount of Olives; and John relates the discourse concerning Peter and several others, before he says, xiv. 31. *Arise, let us go hence.* John is so very circumstantial in relating all the transactions towards the close of our Lord's history, that I prefer his account, though it is not favoured by Matthew.

Some suppose that, notwithstanding the words of John, last quoted, our Lord did not leave the place where he spake them; because in xviii. 1. it is said, that *when he had spoken these words, viz. the prayer for his disciples, &c. he went with his disciples over the brook Cedron.* But I do not see for what purpose the evangelist would have mentioned our Lord's saying, *Arise, let us go hence*, if they had not actually gone; and I see

no difficulty in supposing, that, as it was night, probably very still, and certainly moon-light, Jesus might discourse as he went along, at least that he might stop at some place without the town, and before he went over the brook.

SECTION XVII.

A Computation of the Time that was necessary for the Purpose of Christ's Ministry.

THE greatest objection that can be made to the hypothesis, of our Lord's ministry having continued no longer than a year, or a year and a few months, arises from the supposed impossibility of crowding the business of the evangelical history into so small a compass. The more effectually to answer this objection, I shall briefly go over the whole history of Christ, and collect all the *notes of time* that I can find in it. This I did at first, in order to judge of the *possibility* of the scheme; but the result of my observations convinced me of the great *probability* of it, independent of all other arguments. For when I found that every thing related of the public ministry of Christ fell with ease within these limits, I was sensible that more time would have been both unnecessary, and an incumbrance to the scheme. Whether this kind of evidence will have the same weight with my reader, I cannot tell. I shall lay before him the result of my observations, that he may judge for himself.

We

We have no date from the history of the gospel to determine the time of the year when John began to preach, or when Jesus was baptized. Jerom, Eusebius, and Origen, fix the time of Christ's baptism to the seventh of January, which seems to have been an old tradition. See *Pikington's Chronological Dissertations*, N^o. 55, Notes, p. 9. This writer supposes that John began his ministry in September, when the wilderness could furnish neither locusts, nor wild honey.

It can hardly be supposed, for the reasons given in a preceding section, that after the first passover (which, I suppose, to have fallen on Tuesday the 30th of March, that year) Jesus spent more than one sabbath in Judea, before his arrival in Galilee. Where he spent that sabbath (the 3d of April) is not said; but as all the known events that intervened between this sabbath and that which he spent at Capernaum, are his journey through Samaria, two days stay at Sychar (which, agreeably to a mode of speaking usual in the scriptures, may, perhaps, only mean part of two days, or little more than a night) and his interview with the nobleman at Cana, we may well suppose that this last mentioned was the 10th, and that he arrived at that place on the day before, when he called Peter and John, &c.

This was the sabbath on which Jesus healed the demoniac in the synagogue, and Peter's wife's mother at Peter's own house, with many other sick persons; which gave rise to his very great fame in that place, Mark i. 28; so that, in order to avoid the prodigious concourse of people that crowded to him upon the occasion, he retired early the next morning (Sunday the 11th) into the neighbouring desert, whither his disciples resorted to him, and from whence he visited the places in that district.

On

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On this excursion from Capernaum, it appears from Mark 1. ii. that he was absent only *a few days*. Now if we admit these few days to be a week; which is more than sufficient, considering that we have no account of any intervening events, except the sermon on the mount, and the cure of the leper, we may fix his return for the Sunday following, or April the 18th. Allowing one day more, it will be Monday, April the 19th.

The day on which the disciples plucked the ears of corn, I suppose to have been the next sabbath, as the transactions will easily admit of it; for, excepting the time that was taken up in crossing the sea of Tiberias, and returning to Capernaum, we have no events, but what are expressly confined to two or three days.

Immediately on his entering Capernaum, he healed the Centurion's servant, and the very *next day*, Luke vii. 11, (Tuesday the 20th) he was at Nain, where he raised the widow's son. I can hardly help thinking, but that Jesus did not perform this journey on foot; for it seems to have been about twenty miles, which is rather too far for him to have walked conveniently. It is an objection, however, to this supposition, that *many of Jesus's disciples and much people* are said to have gone with him, Luke vii. 11. There is a great difference, indeed, in the maps of the Holy Land, with respect to the situation of Nain. In some of them it is placed to the East, and in some to the West of Nazareth; though most of them place it to the East. According to both it was about the same distance from Capernaum; but according to the latter it was more conveniently situated for crossing the sea to Gadara; being about half way between Nazareth and the southern part of the sea of Galilee.

I conclude, that very little time elapsed between Jesus's return to Capernaum, and his crossing the sea to Gadara, because Matthew connects these two events together, saying, viii. 18.
that,

that, *when he saw great multitudes he went to the other side of the sea.* Admitting that he set out from Nain early the next morning (Wednesday the 21st) in the same mode of travelling in which he had come to Nain, he might easily have got to the other side of the sea before night. The storm they met with may as well be supposed to have quickened, as to have retarded their passage; and probably it was not of long continuance, as they would naturally awake Jesus on the first apprehension of danger. That sea is but about five or six miles over in that place, so that the navigation of it could not, in general, exceed an hour.

Considering the reason why Jesus had just left Capernaum, *viz.* the croud, it is not probable that he would stay long in Nain, after so illustrious a miracle as he had performed in that place. It is expressly said, that *much people of the city attended the funeral, that this miracle occasioned a rumour of him to go throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.* Luke vii. 17.

On the other side of the sea, it is evident, that our Lord made but little stay. The demoniac met him immediately on his landing, Mark v. 2, and as soon as ever the cure was performed, and the swine drowned, in consequence of it (which events followed close upon one another, Mark v. 13) the people of the country urged him to depart.

Upon the supposition that he landed in the evening, he might set sail again about sun-set; and as the moon was about the last quarter, there would be no difficulty in reaching Capernaum before morning (Thursday the 22d) the distance being only twelve or fifteen miles. So that the events of the busy day on which he called Matthew, might happen on that very day; and then we shall be at a loss how to dispose of Jesus till the sabbath

sabbath following, on which the disciples plucked the ears of corn. If, therefore, any of the preceding events seem to be too crowded, we may suppose that he arrived at Capernaum on the Friday.

I see no reason to suppose, with some, that the entertainment which Matthew made for Jesus, mentioned Matt. ix. 10. and Luke v. 29. was on a different day from that on which that apostle was called. The very next words that follow the account of Matthew's rising and following Jesus are, *And as he was at meat in the house.* Luke, indeed, supposes, that Matthew made a great feast on purpose for him; but it might be a day on which he expected some of his friends, and was already prepared: or, supposing that this feast was made on purpose to entertain Jesus, we have room enough for it. Our Lord might land at Capernaum early in the morning, and, after healing the sick of the palsy, be walking by the sea side, and call Matthew long before noon; so that before evening there was time enough to make any entertainment, and invite his friends. During that entertainment was the discourse with the disciples of John, and during that discourse Jairus waited upon Jesus; and the raising of his daughter, healing the woman who had the bloody issue by the way, giving sight to two blind men, and curing a demoniac, comprise all the remaining events of the day; and they are no more than might easily fall within the compass of a day. Admitting, however, that these events took up two days, it appears that we have even three days for them.

As to Matthew's *accomplis*, which have been urged by some; they might for any thing that we know, have been settled in an hour. Perhaps, having just made his payments, they required no settling at all; or that business might have been done by means of a friend. The story is so told, that we cannot but

S

suppose,

suppose, that Matthew became a follower of Jesus from the very day on which he was called. The sons of Zebedee immediately left their father, their nets, and every thing, and followed Jesus forthwith; and why should we allow Matthew any longer respite?

If, with Luke, we suppose the sabbath on which Jesus healed the man who had the withered hand, not to have been the same with that on which the disciples plucked the ears of corn (though I think it most probable that they were the same, see p. 119) we shall not be in the least embarrassed with respect to this Harmony; for as this Evangelist mentions no events as happening between these sabbaths, and gives no note whereby we can fix the time of them, we may suppose that they were mentioned in the same place, because the transactions in them were similar, and not because they were contiguous. We may, therefore, suppose that one of the sabbaths was the 17th of April, the 8th or 15th of May, or, indeed, any sabbath during our Lord's stay in Galilee.

If we consider the events that passed between this sabbath on which the disciples plucked the ears of corn, and on which Jesus healed the man with the withered hand, and the sabbath on which he was rejected at Nazareth, we shall not see the least reason to suppose that any other intervened between them, for we have no more *transactions* than are expressly limited to one day, and *hints* of what might require two or three.

Having incurred the violent resentment of the Pharisees, by the transactions of the last mentioned sabbath, Jesus retired into a desert place, whither the multitudes followed him, and he healed them, Matt. xii. 15. At this time, also, he set apart the twelve apostles, Mark iii. 13.

Admitting

Admitting that these things took up Sunday and Monday, Tuesday the 27th of May, will be the day on which he cured the blind and dumb demoniac, and held the discourse by the sea side, as recited in the preceding view of the Harmony. On Thursday, therefore, the 29th, he might set out for Nazareth, and reach it the next day.

From the sabbath on which he was rejected at Nazareth, May 1, to the feast of Pentecost, which was on Thursday, May the 20th; we have two weeks and five days, and no account of any transactions that took up more than three or four days, except the mission of the Twelve, which, as I have shown, p. 56, could not well take up much more than a week.

Supposing the mission to have been on Sunday the 2d of May, the return may be fixed for Sunday the 9th; and on the day following, Monday the 10th, Jesus might feed the five thousand, be seen walking on the sea that night, and hold the discourse concerning bread the day following, Tuesday the 11th.

As the moon changed on the 13th of this month, she would be then in her last quarter, and consequently give light in the morning, by which Jesus might be seen at a distance from the ship. But I do not see that the history necessarily requires the light of the moon. It is not said at what distance Jesus was seen from the ship, and it being then the fourth, or last watch of the night (Matt. xiv. 25) it must have been near break of day. Besides, the stars give more light in the clear atmosphere of Judea, than they generally do with us; and except in the rainy season, the nights are seldom cloudy, and it was harvest time.

Upon this supposition we shall be at liberty to defer the return of the Twelve till Thursday the 13th, and this will be the more

convenient, as it will allow just sufficient time for feeding the five thousand, and the discourse about bread, which, being delivered in the synagogue of Capernaum, was probably on the sabbath following.

If I have acquitted myself to the satisfaction of my reader in the computation of time for the preceding part of the history, it must, I imagine, be allowed, that every difficulty attending the hypothesis I am endeavouring to support, is surmounted, as far as it depends upon this computation; since, in the remainder of the history, we have fewer facts, and much more time for them. Indeed, it might be expected, that the sacred historians would be more circumstantial in their account of the first part of our Lord's ministry. The events of it, being all new and extraordinary, would make a deep impression on their minds; and each of them, having related an event or discourse of any kind, would have little inducement to relate another that was similar to it, and that occurred later in the history. But the last events in the history, being much more striking and important than the rest, are related with great particularity by them all.

From the feast of Pentecost to the feast of Tabernacles, which was on Friday the 24th of September that year, was eighteen weeks; whereas the events belonging to this interval cannot be supposed to have taken up one half of them.

It doth not appear that Jesus made any long stay at Jerusalem at this feast. The reason that is given why he did not chuse to *walk in Judea* at that time was, that the *Jews sought to kill him*; and that resolution was formed on the first sabbath after the feast, when he cured the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda.

The

The first event upon record after Jesus's return to Galilee is his discourse concerning traditions. Supposing this to have been in the neighbourhood of Capernaum, his journey from thence to the coasts of Tyre and Sydon, being about 60 miles, might take a fortnight or three weeks. As he made this journey in a private manner, which we may infer from his hope of not being known when he entered into a house, at the end of his journey, Mark vii. 24. (an expectation which he could not have formed, if he had travelled by slow stages, preaching and working miracles all the way) and as he is not said to have done any thing in that country, besides curing the daughter of the Syrophenician woman, we may conclude that the whole excursion could not have taken up more than the time above mentioned.

After his return we find him travelling through the coasts of Decapolis, on the eastern shore of the sea of Tiberias; where he cured one man who had an impediment in his speech, and another who was blind. As this whole territory did not exceed twenty miles in length, we may allow a week or a fortnight for this progress, at the end of which, being in a desert place, where the multitude had been with him three days, Mark viii. 2. (*i. e.* probably two nights and part of three days) he again fed them by a miracle.

Immediately after this event Jesus went by ship to the parts of Dalmanutha, Mark viii. 10, or Magdala, Matt. xv. 39, on the same side of the sea, where he discoursed with the Pharisees concerning the sign from heaven. After this he crossed the sea, and at Bethsaida cured a blind man. For these events a week may certainly be deemed more than sufficient.

The next journey we have an account of is to Caesarea Philippi, about forty miles; when, on the way, he began to foretell

foretell his sufferings, which is expressly said to have been six days before the transfiguration, Matt. xvii. 1, on a mountain near Capernaum. If we allow a fortnight for this excursion, we shall have found events for no more than six or eight of the seventeen weeks that he was in Galilee at this time, allowing one week for his journey to and from Jerusalem. For from the transfiguration to our Lord's taking his final leave of Galilee, nothing is said to have happened but the cure of the demoniacal child at the foot of the mount, and some discourses at Capernaum in that neighbourhood. However, as Jesus did not set out for this feast till after his brethren were gone up, John vii. 3. and did not arrive at Jerusalem till about the middle of it, v. 14. (going, perhaps for the greater privacy, by the country beyond Jordan, Matt. xix. 1.) we may allow a few days more for his stay in Galilee at this time.

A very few days might suffice for all that passed at Jerusalem at the feast of Tabernacles, as it consisted chiefly of discourses with the Jews, related in the eighth and ninth chapters of John.

What passed between this feast and the feast of Dedication, nine weeks afterwards, we are no where informed; so that to fill up this chasm, I have been obliged to insert in this place all those discourses and incidents mentioned by Luke, which I did not know how to dispose of better. It is probable, that the manner in which our Lord passed his time in Judea was so similar to the preceding part of his ministry in Galilee, that the evangelists, who all appear to have studied conciseness, thought it superfluous to relate the particulars. There is, however, an absolute silence in all of them from this time, till within a few weeks before our Lord's death; except that John only mentions a few particulars of what passed at the feast of Dedication, ch. 10. and the resurrection of Lazarus.

All

All that is said to have passed between the feast of Dedication and the last passover, an interval of more than sixteen weeks, are the discourses beyond Jordan, the journey from thence to raise Lazarus, the retreat to Ephraim, and the last journey through Jericho to Jerusalem; all which can hardly be supposed to have taken up four weeks.

It is by no means necessary for me to go over the remainder of the history, as all Harmonists are agreed with respect to the time in which it was comprised, though they differ in their arrangement of particular facts. Not but that a review of the history of the last week before our Lord's death, would be favourable to the hypothesis I am endeavouring to support, as it would exhibit a scene of much more business than I have had occasion to bring into any two weeks before.

It certainly appears, upon the whole, that one year was abundantly sufficient for all the events recorded in the evangelical history. No person, reading Matthew, Mark, or Luke, could possibly have imagined that they took up more; and every thing is perfectly easy in John, admitting the transposition of one chapter, the present connection of which evidently shows it to be out of its proper place; and the interpolation of the word *passover* before *feast of the Jews*; a mistake so easy, in some early transcriber (by taking into the text a marginal illustration of some person, who rashly supposed the *passover* was the feast referred to), and so much like other mistakes, that are generally supposed to have been made, since these books came from the hands of the original writers, that a much smaller advantage than is here proposed by it would justify us in admitting it. In fact, other critics have admitted it for different, and less weighty reasons. There are persons, however, who would not alter the present copies of the New Testament, though they were obliged to suppose, that the public

lic ministry of Christ lasted *forty* years instead of *four*, which is the general hypothesis.

I shall conclude this section with observing, that, according to the preceding disposition of our Lord's history, we have an easy plan of his public ministry, and observe a pretty equal distribution of his labours, to instruct and convert the people of the Jews. For almost all the former half of the year was spent in Galilee, and the latter in Judea.

Galilee is a country of about forty miles in length, lying East and West, and about fifteen, or in some places twenty miles in breadth. Cana is situated in the Western part of it, Nazareth about the center, and Capernaum in the East. This part of the country was, probably, the most populous, being situated upon the sea of Galilee, which employed a great number of ships.

Our Lord spent all the early part of his life at Nazareth; but probably was not conspicuous. He began to work miracles at Cana in the West, but presently, leaving that place, he spent the first part of his public preaching in the more populous country, about Capernaum, in the East; after he had opened his commission, as we may say, in Judea, and especially in the parts near Jordan, where John had borne witness of him, and pointed him out to the people.

During the first weeks of his preaching in Capernaum and the neighbourhood, he was closely attended by his disciples, who may be supposed not to be yet qualified to preach themselves. But before he left Galilee for that time, he removed to Nazareth, and its neighbourhood, where the people must have been in some measure prepared to receive him; and not having much time to spend there, he sent out the twelve apostles,

two and two, to assist him in going over that part of the country, which seems to have been but thinly inhabited.

After Pentecost our Lord made a progress through *Trachonitis*, and to the utmost northern boundary of the land of Canaan, towards Tyre and Sydon. During this part of his stay in Galilee, it is not improbable but that his disciples might assist him in preaching the gospel, though it be not particularly mentioned.

Taking his final leave of Galilee, Jesus sent out seventy disciples, to preach in the larger country of Judea. He also several times visited the country beyond Jordan; nor was Samaria by any means neglected by him.

Upon the whole, all the country that was formerly possessed by the twelve tribes, may be supposed to have been pretty equally enlightened by the preaching of the gospel, and to have enjoyed nearly equal advantages, during the course of our Lord's public preaching.

A

JEWISH and JULIAN CALENDAR

FOR

The Time of the public Ministry of CHRIST.

A.D.	D. H. M.	Dominical Letters.
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28	Full Moon in March 29 17 87	D. C.
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29	18 7 5	B.
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THE CALENDAR.

¹ Nisan 30 days.

Julian. Jewish.
March

17	1	
18	2	B EFORE the Passover in this month Jesus had attended the preaching
19	3	of John, had been baptized by him, had passed 40 days in the wilder-
20	4	ness, and had preached in Judea, probably both before and after his
21	5	return to Cana in Galilee, where he turned the water into wine; but
22	6	we have no particular account of any of his discourses.
23	7	
24	8	
25	9	
26	10	
27	11	
28	12	
29	13	
30	14	THE PASSEVER. Jesus at Jerusalem performs many miracles not specified,
31	15	and discourses with Nicodemus; after which he preaches and makes
April		disciples in the neighbourhood.
1	16	
2	17	About this time John is cast into prison.
3	18	
4	19	Jesus having given umbrage to the Jews by the disciples he made before
5	20	and after the passover, leaves that country to go into Galilee.
6	21	He discourses with the woman of Samaria and arrives at Sychar.
7	22	Leaving Sychar he arrives at Cana, where he cures the son of a nobleman
8	23	of Capernaum.
9	24	Jesus calls Peter, James, and Andrew, to attend him and enter Capernaum.
10	25	He cures a demoniac in the synagogue, and Peter's wife's mother at Peter's
11	26	house.
12	27	Early in the morning he leaves Capernaum to preach in the neighbouring
13	28	towns; and during this excursion he delivers the sermon on the mount,
14	29	on his descent from which he cures a leper.
15	30	

2 Yihar 29 days.

April		
16	1	
17	* 2	
18	3	Jesus returns to Capernaum, and heals the Centurion's servant.
19	4	
20	5	At Nain he raises a young man to life.
21	6	He crosses the sea of Galilee, where he allays a storm, and on his landing cures a demoniac.
22	7	At Capernaum he cures a paralytic person, calls Matthew and dines with
23	8	him, cures a woman who had a bloody issue, and raises Jairus's daughter.
24	* 9	Jesus restores a withered hand, after walking through a cornfield with his disciples.
25	10	He retires to a desert place, and on a mountain sets apart the twelve apostles.
26	11	
27	12	Jesus cures a deaf and dumb demoniac, discourses about the sin against the
28	13	Holy Ghost, his mother and brethren came to speak to him, and on the
29	14	same day he delivers the parable of the sower, &c. from a ship.
30	15	He goes to Nazareth.
May		
1	* 16	He preaches in the synagogue, and is insulted.
2	17	He preaches in the neighbouring villages, and sends out the Twelve.
3	18	In the absence of the Twelve the disciples of John came to him.
4	19	
5	20	About this time Jesus dines with Simon the Pharisee.
6	21	
7	22	
8	* 23	
9	24	
10	25	
11	26	Jesus and his disciples hear of the death of John the Baptist, and retire out
12	27	of Herod's dominions.
13	28	The Twelve meet Jesus. He feeds the five thousand, and walks on the sea.
14	29	Jesus arrives at Capernaum.

3 Sivan 30 days.

May		
15	*	1 He discourses in the synagogue concerning bread.
16		2
17		3 Jesus leaves Galilee to go to Jerusalem.
18		4
19		5
20		6 PENTECOST.
21		7
22	*	8 Jesus heals the infirm man at the pool of Bethesda, and discourses with the
23		9 Jews concerning his mission. They seeking to kill him, he goes into
24		10 Galilee.
25		11
26		12
27		13 He discourses with the Jews who had followed him from Jerusalem con-
28		14 cerning traditions.
29	*	15
30		16
31		17
June		
1		18
2		19
3		20
4		21
5	*	22
6		23 In the neighbourhood of Sidon, Jesus cures the daughter of a Syrophenician
7		24 woman.
8		25
9		26
10		27
11		28
12	*	29
13		30 Jesus travels through Decapolis, where he cures a man who had an impedi-
		ment in his speech, and another who was blind.

4 Thammuz 29 days.

June

14	1	
15	2	
16	3	
17	4	
18	5	
19	* 6	
20	7	
21	8	
22	9	
23	10	
24	11	
25	12	
26	* 13	
27	14	At the termination of the progress through Decapolis, Jesus feeds the four thousand.
28	15	He goes by sea to Dalmanutha, where he discourses with the Pharisees
29	16	about the sign from heaven.
30	17	He crosses part of the sea to go to Bethsaida, where he cures a blind man.

July

1	18	
2	19	
3	* 20	
4	21	Jesus sets out on his progress through Caesarea Philippi, in some part of which he begins to discourse about his future sufferings.
5	22	
6	23	
7	24	
8	25	
9	26	
10	* 27	
11	28	
12	29	

5 Abb 30 days.

July

13 1
 14 2
 15 3
 16 4
 17 * 5
 18 6
 19 7
 20 8
 21 9
 22 10
 23 11
 24 * 12
 25 13
 26 14
 27 15
 28 16
 29 17
 30 18
 31 * 19

August

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 11 30

Jesus is transfigured on a mountain near Capernaum; descending from
 which he cures a demoniacal boy, and on his arrival at Capernaum he
 discourses with his disciples about humility.

6 Elul 29 days.

August

1 Of what Jefus did in this month we have no account.

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September

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7 Tisri 30 days.

September

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October

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The seventy disciples seem to have been sent out after Jesus had set out on his journey to Jerusalem to the feast of Tabernacles. How long this mission lasted does not appear.

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES. Jesus arrived late at this feast, and then held the discourses with the Jews related John viii. and ix.

THE CALENDAR.

8 Marchezvan 29 days.

October

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November

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Of what Jesus did in this month, and the whole of the interval between the feast of Tabernacles and Dedication, we have no distinct account. It seems most probable that in this place we are to place those discourses and incidents which are related by Luke, and contained in Section 50, &c. of this Harmony.

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9 Casteu 29 days. 8

November

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December

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THE FEAST OF DEDICATION. At this feast Jesus held the discourse with the Jews related John x, on occasion of which they seeking his life, he returned beyond Jordan.

10 Thabet 29 days.

December

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January

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Jefus being beyond Jordan, holds the difcourfe concerning the danger of riches, &c. and bleffes the children that were brought to him.

11. Sebat 30 days.

January

5 1 Of what Jesus did this month we have no account.

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February

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12 Adar 29 days.

February

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1 It was probably in this month that Jesus, being beyond Jordan, heard of the death of Lazarus, upon which he went to Bethany where he raised him from the dead. This miracle so much excited the envy and malice of his enemies that they renewed their designs upon his life, which induced him to retire to the desert of Ephraim in Judea.

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13 Nisan 30 days.

March		
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12 *	9	Jesus sups at Bethany when Mary anoints him.
13	10	He enters Jerusalem in triumph, purges the temple, and retires to Bethany.
14	11	He curses the fig-tree, and holds several discourses with the Jews in the temple.
15	12	The Greeks introduced to Jesus. The voice from heaven, and the prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem.
16	13	
17	14	THE PASSOVER. The Lord's supper instituted.
18 F.M.	15	Jesus is crucified.
19 *	16	
20	17	He rises from the dead
21	18	
22	19	
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27	24	Jesus appears to the apostles when Thomas was present.
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April		
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N. B. The full moon was on the 18th of March this year.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

O F

CONSIDERABLE EVENTS,

From the Beginning of the Reign of HEROD to the Death
of CHRIST. (a)

Julian Period.	Before Christ.	
4674	40	HEROD declared king of Judea by the Roman Senate.
75	39	He takes possession of Galilee and Samaria.
77	37	Herod takes Jerusalem. Antigonus beheaded.
83	31	The battle of Actium, 2d of September.
84	30	Herod makes his peace with Octavian at Rhodes.
85	29	He puts his wife Mariamne to death.
87	27	The monarchy of the Roman empire, with the title of Augustus, conferred on Octavian, whence the Augustan æra commences.
92	22	Herod receives from Augustus <i>Trachonitis</i> , <i>Auranitis</i> , and <i>Batanea</i> , in addition to his former dominions.
94	20	He begins to rebuild the temple in the 18th of his reign reckoned from the death of Antigonus.
96	18	The building of the temple completed.
4701	13	Herod sets up Antipater against the sons of Mariamne. Titius made governor of Syria.
4	10	Herod having finished his work at Cæsarea, gives it that name in honour of Augustus Cæsar. He builds also Cypron, Antipatris, Phasaelis, and the tower of Phasael at Jerusalem.
5	9	Saturninus made governor of Syria.
6	8	Augustus takes the census of the Roman citizens at Rome. He corrects the Julian year, and gives his own name to the month August.
7	7	The enrolment of the Jews by Quirinius, who was afterwards governor of Syria. Jesus born.

(a) As this table, though taken chiefly from PRIDEAUX, was filled up from DU FRESNOY, and the UNIVERSAL HISTORY; and these do not agree in all things; I do not pretend to vouch for any but the principal events, and such as are particularly connected with the history of Christ.

Jul. Per.

B. C.

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- 6 Herod causes both the sons of Mariamne to be strangled. The Magi visit Jerusalem. Jesus carried to Egypt. Qu. Varus made governor of Syria.
- 9 5 A plot of Antipater against his father's life detected.
- 10 4 Antipater put to death, and five days after, a few days before the passover, Herod dies.
- 11 3 Archelaus succeeds Herod in Judea, Idumea, and Samaria. Herod Antipater in Galilee Perea, and Philip in Auranitis and Trachonitis, Paneas, and Batanea. Joseph and Mary return with Jesus out of Egypt, and settle at Nazareth.
- 12 2 Augustus banishes his daughter Julia.
- 13 1 Caius Cæsar, the elder grandson of Augustus, sent into Armenia, and A. D. Tigranes raised to the throne.
- 14 1 The commencement of the Christian æra according to Dionysius Exiguus.
- 15 2 Lucius Cæsar, the younger grandson of Augustus, dies at Marseilles.
- 16 3 Caius Cæsar, having received a wound in Armenia, dies in Lydia.
- 17 4 Tiberius is adopted by Augustus.
- 18 5 Jesus, being twelve years old, was examined by the Jewish doctors in the temple.
- 19 6 Archelaus being accused of male administration before Augustus, is banished to Vienne in Gaul, and Sulpicius Quirinius, is sent to be governor of Syria and to take the census in Judea, when Coponius is made Procurator. Great troubles ensued at Judea on this change.
- 20 7 Judas the Gaulonite raises an insurrection in Judea. The Samaritans pollute the temple with dead men's bones at the Passover.
- 21 8 Augustus makes laws to encourage marriage.
- 22 9 Tiberius, and Germanicus, reduce Batto, who had revolted in Dalmatia.
- 23 10 Marcus Ambivius made Procurator of Judea.
- 24 11 Salome the sister of Herod dies.
- 25 12 Tiberius admitted into partnership with Augustus in the empire.
- 26 13 Annius Rufus made Procurator of Judea.
- 27 14 Augustus dies at Nola on the 19th of August, and is succeeded by Tiberius in the whole empire. Silanus made governor of Syria.
- 28 15 Valerius Gratus made Procurator of Judea.
- 29 16 Germanicus defeats Arminius and the Germans. Herod Antipas builds Tiberias in honour of Tiberius.
- 30 17 Germanicus sent into the East. Twelve cities of Asia Minor overthrown by an earthquake.

T H E T A B L E

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Per. Jul.	A. D.	
473 ¹	18	Germanicus reduces Cappadocia, and Commagene to the form of Roman provinces, and settles the affairs of Armenia.
32	19	Germanicus visits Egypt, and is poisoned at Antioch by Piso, President of Syria.
33	20	Piso, being accused of it, kills himself.
34	21	Jul. Florus revolts in Gaul, is defeated, and kills himself.
35	22	Tacfacinas defeated, and his brother taken prisoner by Blasus.
36	23	Valerius Gratus removes Annas from the office of High-priest after he had enjoyed it 15 years, and puts in his place Ismael the son of Fabus.
37	24	Eleazar the son of Annas is made High-priest in the place of Ismael. Tacfacinas totally routed and killed.
38	25	Simon the son of Camith is made High-priest in the place of Eleazar. Pontius Pilate arrives Procurator of Judea in the place of Valerius Gratus.
39	26	Joseph, surnamed Caiaphas, son in law of Annas, is made High-priest in the place of Simon.
40	27	Tiberius retires to Capree, where he spent the last ten years of his life.
41	28	John the Baptist begins to preach, and Jesus is baptised by him, and begins to preach and work miracles.
42	29	John is imprisoned and beheaded by Herod Antipas, Jesus is crucified by Pilate, and, rising from the dead, the gospel begins to be preached in his name through all the world.

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